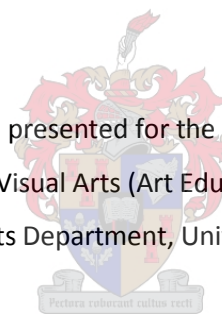


**CRITICAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: INVESTIGATING NEW UNDERSTANDINGS
IN A TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
AT MONTAGU HIGH SCHOOL, WESTERN CAPE**

By Wendy Smidt

Dissertation presented for the Master's degree in
Visual Arts (Art Education)
at the Visual Arts Department, University of Stellenbosch



Promoter: Dr E Costandius

December 2015

DECLARATION

By submitting this dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Wendy Smidt

August 21, 2015

ABSTRACT

This research focused on the perceptions of critical citizenship of twelve participants who are Visual Arts learners at Montagu High School in the Western Cape. My aim with this research was to investigate new understandings of the notion of critical citizenship in our teaching and learning environment. These new understandings involved a deeper insight specifically into the Visual Arts learners' perceptions of concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship. The theoretical perspectives that informed my research were perspectives on Critical Citizenship Education, on Globalisation and Education, and on Learning Strategies for Critical Citizenship Education. These include collaborative learning, dialogue and reflection. The chapter on context discusses current global developments regarding Critical Citizenship Education, as well as education in a national context; the FET phase of Visual Arts education as a field of study; and Montagu High School as institutional context. The current CAPS Curriculum (2011) served as a framework for the Visual Culture Study -content. Three practical projects were investigated to establish which new understandings the participants (learners) could develop about the notion of critical citizenship and its associated meanings in a teaching and learning environment. A case study research design was chosen for the empirical part of this qualitative study and I as researcher used an inductive content analysis process whereby data was organised according to emerging themes. The presentation and discussion of data aim to reflect the learners' personal understandings, which were used by the researcher to form conclusions about the issues which have been researched. A prominent focus in the learners' reflections on Critical Citizenship Education was the different understandings of 'culture'. Some learners reacted strongly to media reports about various acts of vandalism aimed at national monuments in South Africa. These learners also expressed their concern about their own future in this country. My research suggests that educators need to reflect upon and reinterpret their teaching strategies towards the promotion of learners' consciousness of Critical Citizenship Education as a way of life. Educators should encourage learners to engage in learning through curiosity, which will empower them with knowledge, skills and critical-creative attitudes to make informed decisions. In terms of future study, it might be useful to examine the link between culture and learning in the South African context more closely.

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The celebration of 20 Years of Freedom and democracy in South Africa created an opportunity to reflect on how our freedom and democracy were achieved; the progress we have made during the past two decades; and on how South Africans will work together to implement Vision 2030 (Mokgalane, SACE 2015:3). Vision 2030 of the National Development Plan (NDP) aims to eliminate income poverty and increase employment; reduce gender inequality; determine opportunity by ability, education and hard work; focus on young people; and encourage citizens to be active in their own development (*ibid.*). Although the South African Education system is still in a process of transition, major changes have been implemented since 1994. The year 2014 marks the final phasing in of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in the Senior Phase (Grades 7 to 9) and in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase (Grade 12). As educators we have to guide students in how to cope with life in a local as well as global context and act as responsible and critical citizens. In this regard, the coursework of my Master's studies assisted me in developing an intentional awareness of the transformation process in education on a national as well as a global level. The coursework inspired and challenged me to critically reflect on and re-evaluate my existing teaching ideologies and practices.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The Visual Arts class at Montagu High School as a learning and teaching environment provided a culturally and contextually specific situation in the sense that the learners attend afternoon classes as a multi-grade group with Visual Arts representing their seventh or eighth subject. The twelve learners who participated in this research represent a diverse group regarding age, grade, culture, gender, race, and language orientation. Multi-grade contexts require the employment of particular teaching methodologies and classroom administration, but that was not the focus of this study. This research was focused on Critical Citizenship Education in a teaching and learning environment. Three applied projects were devised in which dialogue, reflection and visual media were employed in a collaborative effort with the learners in grades 10, 11 and 12 to engage with the notion of critical

citizenship. The first project, called “Living Citizenship”, explored key concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship in teaching and learning. “Living Citizenship” was aimed to uncover the learners’ intuitive understandings of citizenship. This project intended to show that citizenship is not an abstract concept standing in isolation from everyday life, but rather a ‘living’ reality in people’s daily lives. The second project, “Life – a changing journey”, focused on the impact of globalisation on the culture of the learners. The main aim of this project was to create greater awareness of the interconnectedness of social and global changes. It also attempted to uncover different ways of understanding change and cultural specificity. The third project was planned around the theme of “Popular Culture and Contemporary Art”. The purpose of this project was to help learners think critically about their lives, communities, ideas, emotions and values. Project 3 aimed to contribute towards making decisions about objects (and artworks) in a positive way and how learners think and sort out their lives in a complex world.

A deliberate attempt was made to maintain continuity between the three projects, by introducing some of the concepts and theories with which I have become familiar in the Master’s coursework, such as cultural diversity, multi-culturalism, democratic citizenship and social responsibility.

The following section focuses on the problem statement, research question and purpose of my research study.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT, RESEARCH QUESTION AND PURPOSE

1.3.1 Describing the problem

A new era for school education in South Africa was introduced during the period 1994 to 2011. A lack of knowledge of cultural diversity had allowed misconceptions to create division between cultural groups, consequently producing tension. Cultural diversity, in this context, refers to having different cultures acknowledge and respect one another’s differences. Knowledge of the historical past of different cultures may lead to respect, which may engender capability to understand, tolerate and empathise.

The implementation of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) marked a deliberate attempt to move away from the apartheid curriculum and to address skills, knowledge and values. Apart from the unsuccessful implementation of Curriculum 2005, which proved to be inappropriate for the South African context (Mouton, Louw & Strydom 2012; Mathebula 2010), specific deficiencies in the field of Visual Arts education were identified. As basic resources in the form of Visual Arts textbooks were non-existent, Visual Arts educators compiled their own teaching-content according to guidelines that had been provided by the education department. The result was that educators belonging to different communities and cultures, may have interpreted concepts such as democracy, culture, transformation and diversity differently, as the generally accepted meaning of these concepts often disagree with beliefs and value systems (Weldon 2010:361, Erasmus 2009:41). Some of these concepts may have become part of a hidden curriculum, where misinterpretations could have occurred due to insufficient explanation. A hidden curriculum refers to the unwritten, unofficial and unintended values and perspectives that students learn, and how social inequalities are perpetuated and generated in the classroom and social environment.

In 2012, a single comprehensive Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for each approved school subject was implemented as amendments to the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) Grades R - 12. (NCS 2011:3). Fundamental resource material in the form of a Learner's Book and a Teacher's Guide for Visual Arts Grades 10, 11 and 12 provided Visual Arts educators with more detailed guidance and consistency with regard to what they need to teach and how they should assess. The National Curriculum Statement advocates values and principles that relate to those described by Johnson and Morris (2010: 77-96) in their framework for critical citizenship education (Costandius, 2012). As an educational pedagogy, critical citizenship education encourages critical reflection on the lives, communities, ideas, emotions and values of the Grade 10, 11 and 12-learners within the context of their teaching and learning environment. It further envisions a possible future shaped by a holistic development of individual identities in order to function as effective citizens in diverse societies (Johnson & Morris 2010:77, Costandius 2012:10, 12, 153).

1.3.2 Research questions, study aims and objectives

The main research question in this study was formulated as: How do the participants (Visual Arts

Learners of Montagu High School) perceive critical citizenship and specific concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship?

The sub-questions were:

- a) What do their reactions to the concepts say about their knowledge and experience of Critical Citizenship Education?
- b) What do their reactions to the concepts reveal about their immediate and broader context?

Aim: The aim of my research was to investigate new understandings of the concept of critical citizenship in my teaching and learning environment.

The resultant research objectives thus were:

- a) To identify the reactions of the Visual Art Learners to Critical Citizenship Education, and specifically to concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship;
- b) To establish what reactions to the concepts say about their knowledge and experience of Critical Citizenship Education;
- c) To establish what their reaction to the concepts reveal about their immediate and broader context.

1.4 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this research I, as the researcher, worked within an interpretive approach. A case study research design was used for the empirical part of the research of a real-life situation (Yin 1994:2, Mouton 2001:149). I employed the learners' reflections as the main source of data in the case study, together with group discussions, individual conversations and artworks. I also included reflections of my own experience. Data were captured digitally. An additional copy was stored on a back-up hard drive. Information, documents (workbooks) and artwork that formed part of this research are kept in the Visual Arts classroom at Montagu High School. All discussions as well as practical work were located in the Visual Arts classroom. To protect the identities of the participants, the names of the learners have not been revealed.

The inductive content analysis method was employed for the empirical part of the research. This is a process which guides you in identifying key elements and then narrowing it down to central themes. (Mouton 2001:148). Ethical clearance for the research was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee: Division for Research Development of Stellenbosch University. A more detailed description of the research design is given in Chapter 4 (p.25).

1.5 BOUNDARIES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This research focused on the perceptions of twelve participants who are Visual Arts learners at Montagu High School in the Western Cape. The research objectives explained in Section 1.3.2 (p.3, 4) were not aimed at exploring Critical Citizenship Education in the broad context of the curriculum, which would have involved many more projects and a wide variety of subjects. My aim with this research was to investigate new understandings of the notion of critical citizenship in a particular teaching and learning environment. These new understandings involved a deeper insight, specifically into the perceptions held by Visual Arts learners' of concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship. In Chapter 3 (p.18), the Visual Arts curriculum-context will be discussed, together with other contexts in which this research project was situated. Being both educator and researcher made me an integral and subjective part of this research. I therefore acknowledge my own potential bias in this process.

1.6 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH: Chapter 1 (p.1) functions as a general introduction and provides an orientation to the research. This orientation includes the rationale for the investigation, as well as a statement of the research problem.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES: Chapter 2 (p.6) consists of the theoretical framework that informed my research. Theoretical perspectives on three main concepts, namely Critical Citizenship Education, Globalisation and Citizenship Education, and Learning Strategies for Critical Citizenship Education were discussed.

These include collaborative learning, dialogue and reflection – strategies which played prominent roles in this research.

CONTEXTUALISING THE RESEARCH: Chapter 3 (p.18) provides the contexts in which this research was situated: Critical Citizenship Education in a global context; Critical Citizenship Education in Africa and South Africa; Montagu High School as institutional context; the Visual Arts class as teaching and learning environment; the FET phase of Visual Arts as a study field and the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 (Department of Education, South Africa 2011), which served as a framework for the Visual Culture Study-content.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: Chapter 4 (p.25) discusses the research design and methodology that was followed in order to investigate the research problem formulated in Chapter 1 (p.1).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATIONS: Chapter 5 (p.32) presents the data collected from learners' reflections during a six-month period spanning 2014 and 2015. Data are presented within the central themes that emerged from this research, followed by a discussion of the findings.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS: Chapter 6 (p.73) ends the research with conclusions and a discussion of some implications drawn from the findings of my research.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the theoretical perspectives that informed my research. The aim of my research was to investigate new understandings of the concept of critical citizenship in a teaching and learning environment. The resultant research objectives were: (a) to identify the reactions of the Visual Art learners to the concepts of identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship; (b) to determine what their reactions to the concepts reveal about their knowledge and experience of

Critical Citizenship Education; and (c) to establish what their reactions to the concepts suggest about their immediate and broader context.

Theoretical frameworks provide a particular perspective through which to examine a topic. First, I discuss perspectives on Critical Citizenship Education, second, on Globalisation and Citizenship Education and, third, on Learning Strategies for Critical Citizenship Education. These include collaborative learning, dialogue and reflection – strategies which played significant roles in this research. In the next section, I therefore discuss perspectives on Critical Citizenship Education.

2.2 PERSPECTIVES ON CRITICAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Critical Citizenship education intends to engage and develop the whole person (Johnson & Morris 2010; Starkey 2002; Lave & Wenger 1991), imparting more than knowledge, skills and values. There is a focus on critical reflection (Andreotti 2006; Mezirow 1991; Schön 1987), self-reflection (Johnson & Morris 2010; Yip 2007; Kincheloe 2005), emotional experience (Kolb 1984; Illeris 2003; Jarvis 2006), and social interaction (Fenwick 2001; Lave & Wenger 1991; Vygotsky 1978).

In their framework for examining Critical Citizenship Education, Johnson and Morris provide valuable information about the meaning of “critical citizenship” (Johnson & Morris 2010:77-96). They distinguish between two conceptions of critical citizenship, namely critical pedagogy which encourages praxis (*ibid.* p.80) and political emancipation (*ibid.* p.77); and the more conceptual notion of critical thinking, which concerns critical skills such as “exploring, developing, evaluating and making choices” (*ibid.* p.79). These critical skills correspond with specific aims of the CAPS document (Department of Education, South Africa 2011) for Visual Arts education.

Johnson and Morris further acknowledge four distinctive elements, namely (a) “politics”; (b) “society and interaction”; (c) “the self”; and (d) “reflection, action, engagement and possibility” (2010:87). These elements could be applied by both curriculum developers and educators to analyse existing curricular content. In order to investigate new understandings of particular concepts in my teaching and learning environment, I employed this “working, flexible model of critical citizenship” (*ibid.* p.90) to reflect on my teaching strategies. The multi-grade context of my teaching and learning environment in itself challenged values such as “tolerance, human rights and democracy” (Johnson

& Morris 2010:77). I was trained to work in single-grade environments. My knowledge of teaching practices was based on whole-class education, while small-group settings were employed for group-activities. I had to re-think my teaching strategies, time management and skills development in order to meet the requirements set by the CAPS document for Visual Arts education (2011). In Section 2.4 (p.11), I elaborate on Teaching and Learning Strategies for Critical Citizenship Education, and in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.2 (p.21), I discuss the methodologies I have employed in this research.

Critical Citizenship Education, as proposed by De Jaeghere and Tudball (2007) and Johnson and Morris (2010), is a theoretical framework suggesting specific teaching and learning strategies to develop young people's engagement in the democratic aims of equality and justice in multi-cultural societies. Dewey (1938) emphasised three general aims of education in a democratic society. He claimed that development, according to nature, involves nurturing those natural differences which each individual brings to the classroom, and that all learners should be granted equal access to the common curriculum and achieve success without prejudice against individual differences. Secondly, education according to social efficiency is to employ inherent capabilities of individuals in social situations; participation in social activities could contribute to the development of individual personalities. Thirdly, education according to culture will enable each learner to develop a growing capacity to adapt to changing situations and circumstances by means of engagement in life-long learning and constant self-reflection.

The South African Government's review of its education policy is clearly defined in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) Grades R-12 (Department of Education, South Africa 2011:4) which, among other, promotes the principle of "[a]ctive and critical learning: encouraging an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths". Furthermore, the NCS (2011:8) refers to specific aims for Visual Arts education to "appreciate the critical role visual arts play in the enrichment of the visual environment of the school and community" and to "understand the social and historical role of visual arts in transforming societies". The National Curriculum "aims to ensure that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways that are meaningful to their own lives. In this regard, the curriculum promotes knowledge in local contexts, while being sensitive to global imperatives" (*ibid.* p.4). Education and the curriculum have important roles to play in realising these aims. In the field of transformational citizenship education Merryfield (2001) employed post-colonial perspectives to suggest similar pedagogical approaches for global

education and the social studies curriculum. In the following section, perspectives on globalisation and citizenship education will be discussed.

2.3 PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBALISATION AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Different thinkers have taken opposing views regarding globalisation, making this a contentious issue. Two core disputes emerged: Firstly between the ‘radicals’ who acknowledge globalisation as a real phenomenon with consequences that can be experienced everywhere (Giddens 1999:1), and the ‘sceptics’ (Hirst & Thompson 2009) who regard globalisation as an over exaggerated issue with no real effect on world economy. The second dispute exists between those supporting the ‘anti-globalisation’ movement who are opposed to the effects of globalisation, and the ‘positive globalisers’ who believe that globalisation will bring benefits to the world (Giddens 1999:3). However, the increased corporate presence and branding in education, as well as the effect of brands on the identities of young people, have prompted questions among educators. What impact will this have on the forms that education now takes? How should educators respond?

In the context of global citizenship -education, the ability to think and act as global citizens is imperative and may be highly beneficial in the process of cultivating modern democratic thought. Contemporary debates about the curriculum recall the ideas of Socrates and Seneca (Nussbaum 2002:290) when comparing the concept of “free-born” to the perception that education can only be ‘liberal’ when it ‘liberates’ the student’s mind. The curriculum aims to encourage independent thinking and promote equal education opportunities for students, irrespective of their social class, gender or ethnic origin, to become reflective critics of traditional practices. Nussbaum asserts that learning about other cultures encourages learners to make connections between their experiences and learning; both in the school and in their communities. This will enable them to understand how they form part of a global community (McDougall 2005:14, 27). Nussbaum suggests a model for ideal citizenship education with a holistic approach that will produce people with liberated minds, free from the bondage of customs and habits with the potential to “function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world” (Nussbaum 2002:297). It is clear that modern democratic thought not only requires institutions and procedures, it also requires a particular quality of vision, in order to show us how to deal with ‘common world values’ in our quest to promote a notion of

citizenship which fosters diversity and a new perspective for understanding the way in which people might relate to each other in a post-national era.

Osler and Starkey (2003) investigated the notion of citizenship education in the context of globalisation. They acknowledge characteristics of modern society such as “increasingly diverse local communities”, an “interdependent world”, “multicultural communities” and “multiple identities and loyalties” (*ibid.* p.243). They explored young people’s sense of belonging within multi-cultural communities and how they negotiate their multiple identities. Instead of denying multiple loyalties, Osler and Starkey proposed a framework for “re-conceptualized education for cosmopolitan citizenship” (*ibid.* p.245), after David Held’s (1995) model of cosmopolitan democracy. This framework has the benefit of recognizing the importance of local, national and global contexts, as well as the extensive variety of experiences that learners bring to their education. A true understanding of these home and community-based experiences could enable educators to build effectively on learners’ previous knowledge in order to develop a “comprehensive and sustainable” education program (*ibid.* p.244). According to Osler and Starkey, such a model needs to address values such as “peace, human rights, democracy and development” in order to prepare young citizens “to play an active role in shaping the world, at all levels, from the local to the global” (*ibid.* p.252). The above-mentioned values link closely to the “common set of shared values”, Johnson and Morris (2010:77) emphasised in their argument about emerging global and cross-national entities such as the UN and EU which pressurise schools to promote forms of citizenship and multiculturalism, based on the promotion of “tolerance, human rights and democracy” (*ibid.* p.77).

Across the globe different models of Globalisation and Citizenship Education encounter continuous improvement, replacing the basic transmission of knowledge to more learner-centered teaching approaches. Andreotti (2006:41) questions the motive for “wanting to make a difference” and warns educators that ‘what they love doing’ could be directly related to the causes of the problems they were trying to solve in the first place. Her argument points to a central issue in global citizenship education: “whether and how to address the economic and cultural roots of the inequalities in power and wealth/labour distribution in a global complex and uncertain system”, while Osler and Starkey (2003:243) argue that citizenship education is one response to the political and social realities of globalisation, providing the mechanism for transmitting the fundamental shared values on which just and peaceful democratic societies may be built. The humanities play a central role in

the attempt of Global Citizenship Education, empowering young people to function as citizens of a complex interlocking world.

Batos, in Delacruz (2009) notes that globalisation interfaces not only with cultural, economic, political and environmental concerns of people around the world, but also with art and education. It is revealed that Western society has become ‘image-saturated’, over-exposed to consumer-driven visual images (*ibid.* p.89) and the sudden increase of communication networks through the internet, cellular phones, textbooks, television, fashion, and magazines. Such visual imagery influence our way of thinking about the world around us. Visual Culture Studies with its emphasis on visual literacy could assist learners to make meaning of the wide variety of imagery in the media and elsewhere; Visual Culture Studies, which form part of the CAPS document for Visual Arts, Grades 10 -12 (Department of Education, South Africa 2011:52), suggest that “links should be made between international art and South African art” to develop an understanding of art as a form of “global visual communication”. In this sense, Visual Culture Studies has the potential to promote interaction between art and society (*ibid.* p.13) based on values such as tolerance and understanding.

Modern contemporary civilisation is regarded as a combined product of significant contributions made by all peoples in the universal past. In African countries, where Higher Education Institutions traditionally borrowed their models and ideas from Western European counterparts, the challenge is not globalisation, “but rather the possibilities and limitations of making these globalized assets and competencies more relevant for their societies” (Schwartzman 2000:1). For all South African people this entails a regaining of their cultural and societal values in order to experience themselves as human beings with dignity. The challenge for educators is to transform the perceptions of the youth, to enable them to make informed decisions about aspects such as environmental, political and socio-economic affairs, locally and globally. The next section focuses on teaching and learning strategies for Critical Citizenship Education.

2.4 TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR CRITICAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

The contemporary educator has a challenging role in modern, pluralistic societies where multiple worldviews and prominent cultural traditions influence learners’ perceptions about their sense of

identity and social responsibilities within their communities. Contemporary education should teach alternative ways of thinking about culture and art making that may potentially provide the tools for learners to become thoughtful and visionary citizens, realising the link between their education and contemporary identity (Gude 2000:1). Cultural representation should be emphasised in a way that makes it alive to the demands of contemporary history and politics, thus enabling both citizens and educators to relate their own analyses of aesthetic practices to their 'being-in-the-world' or 'presencing' (Walder 2007:195).

The particularity of our learning and teaching situation in the Visual Arts class as mentioned in the introduction to Chapter 1 (p.1), necessitated the selection and application of specific learning strategies in order to meet the formal assessment requirements, determined by the CAPS document for Visual Arts, FET Phase (Department of Education, South Africa 2011:39, 40). Visual Arts learners are encouraged to acquire the following skills: (a) Creative thinking; (b) the ability to formulate ideas; (c) problem solving; (d) investigative skills and the ability to work as a team, time management skills, as well as examination writing skills. In the following section I discuss the collaborative learning strategy which was prominent throughout the realisation of our applied practical projects.

2.4.1 Collaborative learning

This learning strategy draws on Socio-Cultural learning theories (Wang 2006:150), as well as Social Constructivism (Vrasidas 2000:7), provides learners with more effective learning opportunities than the traditional learning environment where the teacher had the role of instructor, and the learners were merely passive receivers of information. Wang (2006:151, 155) quotes Vygotsky who defines collaborative learning as "an instruction method in which students at various performance levels work together in small groups toward a common goal." Personally, I find Vygotsky's reference to "instruction method" in the above-mentioned definition problematic. In collaborative learning the educator is no longer the instructor, but acts as motivator and guide to assist learners in the development of critical thinking skills (*ibid.* pp.150, 156; Fenwick 2001:14).

The collaborative learning environment aims to improve learners' independent and reflective thinking skills (Wang 2006:150). These skills are crucial in the contemporary information-flooded world for the development of critical thinking and lifelong learning skills (*ibid.*) which could enable

learners to access and evaluate information. Wang (p.151) emphasises the important roles that social relations, community and culture play in cognition and learning. Wang further explains how the Cognitive Constructivist approach focuses on learners as individuals who “construct their own knowledge as they engage in the processes of interpreting and making sense of their classroom experience” (*ibid.*). Contrariwise, Cognitive Constructivism has been criticized for “being too closely focused on the individual and ignoring the social and cultural context of learning” (Wang 2006:151). By sharing their individual findings and perceptions with their peers, the Visual Arts learners succeeded in opposing this critique by building on each other’s contributions to reconstruct their thinking process, while simultaneously constructing new meaning. Shared ideas and experiences as well as collaborative problem-solving relate to the enactivist theory which argues that cognition and environment are inseparable. (Fenwick 2001:49). Enactivism claims that humans selectively create their environment through their potential to interact verbally or physically with the world (Kincheloe 2005:18). In this sense, enactivism relates to Lave and Wenger’s (1998) model of situated learning, which defines learning as a social process emerging mainly from our experience of meaningful participation in daily life.

Vygotsky (1978) asserts that social interaction enhances psychological development. His Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) indicates the distance between the level of development when learners solve problems independently; and the level of potential development when learners either receive guidance from their educator, or work “in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky 1978:86). Dewey (1938) and Vygotsky (1978) both consider ‘interaction’ as being one of the most important components of any learning experience. They argue that collective meaning develops through negotiation, which leads to the development of shared knowledge. In Social Constructivism (Vrasidas 2000:7), knowledge is constructed in “communities of practice” (Lave & Wenger 1998:2), whereas Personal Constructivists (Piaget 1977; Von Glasersfeld 1989) claim that knowledge is constructed in the mind while recognising past experiences and cognitive structures. Cobb (1994) argues that Social Constructivism and Personal Constructivism cannot be separated, because both complement each other. This approach was clearly illustrated by the interaction between the grade 10, 11 and 12-learners who shared their ideas and experiences in the projects. Within the social process of their mosaic group-project, the grade 10-learners achieved the “learning of knowledgeable skills” (Lave & Wenger 1991:29). The grade 11-learners participated in “frameworks that have structure” (Lave & Wenger 1991:3) when interpreting the concept of ‘ceremonial cup’ in their ‘celebration cup’- designs. The grade 12-learner, in his role as photographer and reporter, employed past experiences on which new knowledge was built. Vrasidas (2000:11) emphasises

learners' interaction with technology to construct knowledge. The grade 12-learner presented this reflection on Project 1 ("Living Citizenship") in the form of a PowerPoint presentation.

My role as educator was to act as facilitator and motivator to encourage divergent viewpoints. (Fenwick 2001:14, Wang 2006:150). The major goal of a constructivist approach is to promote the formation of "multiple perspectives in various domains" (Vrasidas 2000:10). One way of achieving this, has been by employing collaborative learning strategies, by which learners discussed their personal viewpoints with peers, and negotiated differences. In the next section I will discuss the importance of dialogue as key element in learning strategies.

2.4.2 Dialogue

Dialogue could be defined as an exchange of perceptions for the purpose of acquiring or sharing information. It is a means of human expression which may involve emotion to communicate one's thoughts or feelings assertively.

The use of dialogue is considered one of the most crucial aspects of critical pedagogy (Darder, Baltodano & Torres 2003:15; Freire 1972: 49), building tolerance, understanding and trust – aspects needed to live and cooperate with one another despite differences. Apart from its role in deepening understanding, Smith & Doyle (2002) describes dialogue as a "co-operative activity involving respect", especially in conflict situations. Uncontrolled dialogue could be destructive in nature, causing chaos in a classroom context and disrupting the learning process. Vygotsky (1978) and Dewey (1938) both argue that collective understandings develop by means of negotiation. In terms of collective dialogue during social interaction, it is essential for individuals to maintain their own identities in order to avoid "groupthink" (Janis 1982:13). Batos values conversation as an opportunity to create "a space of contact" (Delacruz 2006:21) between her own culture and those she was learning about. According to Costandius (2012:55), the process of discussion is important because it opens the space for other voices besides that of the lecturer.

In this research, various forms of dialogue were employed. First, the theme of Project 1 was introduced to the Visual Arts learners as a multi-grade group, and involved explaining integration

with Visual Culture Study topics. The discussion was guided by an informative hand-out, which later would become part of a semi-structured workbook. Time was allocated for questions and potential queries. Second, separate grade-group discussions followed in the same classroom space, where the grade 10-group's conversation was aimed at conceptualising, while the grade 11-group negotiated individual representation in their practical project. A one-on-one conversation between the researcher and the Grade 12-learner outlined the requirements of the learner's role as 'reporter' who documented both the progress and outcome of Project 1 with his camera. Progressive educator John Dewey (1938) indicates that individuals have the potential to create new understandings and transform themselves through a learning-process by performing new roles. Contrariwise, Dewey (1938) and Kolb (1984) emphasised that not all experience educates; reflection on experience is essential (Fenwick 2001:3). Finally, learners' artworks visually communicated their understandings about concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship in their teaching and learning environment.

My role as educator (and researcher) was to facilitate the process and assist the learners where necessary and, as Fenwick (2001:15) argues, not by providing information but rather encouraging the learners to reflect upon and analyse their past experiences. An attempt to maintain a dynamic balance between dialogue and action in these practical projects recalls the notion of praxis described by Freire (1972:40) as a "synergistic process". Giroux (2003:38) argues that praxis requires a fragile "alliance" between theory and practice, "not a unity in which one dissolves the other". The next section focuses on the practice of reflection which played an essential role in this research.

2.4.3 Reflection

In this research, 'reflection' refers to contemplative thought and the opinions of learners, especially in written form or by means of visual images. Reflective thinking promotes the development of higher-order thinking skills, by means of conceptualization where newly constructed knowledge relates to previous understandings.

The concept of 'reflective thought' was introduced by Dewey in 1910 in his book, "How We Think", a work designed for educators. Dewey (1938) claimed that people do not learn from experiences; they rather learn from reflecting on life-experiences. The critical theory approach of Habermas (1990),

Mezirow (1991) and Freire (1972) views critical self-reflection as key element in the process of learning and development, with the purpose to ameliorate limiting political and social factors (Fenwick 2001:8). Brookfield (1995) and Cranton (1996) suggest that educators update their professional qualifications and engage in self-reflection before asking the learners to do so. The educator, in his role as facilitator, establishes a teaching and learning environment that is “democratic, open, rational, has access to all available information, and promotes critical reflection” (Taylor 1998:49). Maintaining a balance between this role of facilitator and one’s own personal intentions and perspectives, which involves regular critical self-reflection, is crucial (Fenwick 2001:16). Jaspers (1963) describes self-reflection as a process which improves a person’s self-awareness and facilitates self-understanding. As a critique, Yip (2007) argues that Jaspers’ (1963) definition of self-reflection failed to mention that it is a “self-constructed process” influenced by “social, cultural, political and organizational contexts in practice” (Yip 2007:295, 296).

In my own teaching and learning environment critical reflection on and re-evaluation of my existing teaching ideologies and practices was also necessary (Kolb 1984). The process by which new understandings were investigated in this research involved reflection on historical, cultural, social, political and personal perceptions (Boud & Walker 1991), inevitably recalling Freire’s notion of “true praxis for critical pedagogues” (Freire 1972:101). The process of reflection enables both the educator and the learner to analyse their individual positions within the teaching and learning environment, by “critically reflecting” (Mezirow 1999:14) on “legacies and processes of one’s own cultures and contexts” (Andreotti 2006:48). Freire argues that any changes in a teaching and learning context will activate “the synergistic process of reflection and action”, often requiring an altered response and a different educative role (Freire 1972:40).

Esquivel (2015) claims that contemporary visual arts have lost touch with the arts’ most important task: reflection. Possible reasons could be the high priority placed on creativity and innovation, global competitiveness, mass production and the rapid development of new technologies. Learners’ reflections on the role of ‘popular culture’ (Ashby 2014; Storey 2006; Burke 2004) and ‘contemporary art’ (Esquivel 2015; Smith 2012) in Project 3 clearly showed that they have encountered similar experiences. Contemporary art, and especially design, seldom reflects any reference to the artist / designer’s identity, technical means by which the artwork or design is produced, or theoretical conceptions that underpin these creations. Esquivel (2015) emphasises the importance of reflection on the philosophy and theory of the visual arts of our time. As a learning

area and a body of knowledge which encompasses generations of cultural values and resources, the visual arts are open to multiple interpretations which might be equally valid, provided that they are cognitively supported.

Learner reflections in the form of writing, visual images and artworks provided the data for this research. A questionnaire that serves as a reflective report was employed to identify the responses of the Visual Art learners to the concepts of identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship. Learners' source books served as visual diaries with the purpose of communicating the conceptualising processes leading to the making of their artworks. The CAPS document for Visual Arts Grade 10 -12 (Department of Education, South Africa 2011:47) acknowledges reflective practice as an indication of progression in visual arts skills. Self-assessment and peer-assessment are encouraged as it provides the opportunity for learners to become actively involved in learning from, and reflecting on their own experiences.

2.5 SYNTHESIS

In this chapter I have discussed the theoretical perspectives that informed my research. My work as educator (researcher) was influenced by my understanding of learning and, in particular, learning in practice. The projects undertaken for this research involved social interaction (Johnson & Morris 2010; Wang 2006; Lave & Wenger 1998); dialogue (Johnson & Morris 2010; Darder *et al.* 2003; Freire 1972); collaboration (Wang 2006; Lave & Wenger 1998; Vygotsky 1978); and reflection and action (Boud & Walker 1991; Schön 1987; Freire 1972). It is clear that these theorists' perspectives share characteristics and can therefore not be applied to the human learning process in isolation. Each of these theoretical perspectives has distinct features which may be applied to specific situations where learning opportunities are activated within specific environments. When practised simultaneously, these theoretical perspectives could provide educators and learners with more effective teaching and learning opportunities to develop "critical thinking and lifelong learning skills" (Wang 2006:150). The purpose of my research was to investigate new understandings of the concept of critical citizenship in a teaching and learning environment. Illeris (2003:404) believes that adequate theories can help us to reflect on and better understand our teaching and learning environments. In the next chapter I discuss the context in which the research took place.

CHAPTER 3: CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to situate my research in time and place. In the following sections I describe the different contexts involved in this research, namely Critical Citizenship Education in a global, African and South African context; Montagu High School as institutional context; the Visual Arts class as teaching and learning environment; the FET phase as a study field and the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 (Department of Education, South Africa 2011) which served as a framework for the Visual Culture Study-content. Also included, are three practical projects which have been devised to investigate learners' perceptions of concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship in their learning environment.

3.2 CRITICAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN A GLOBAL, AFRICAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Education systems are currently undergoing change globally, replacing the basic transmission of knowledge to more learner-centered teaching approaches. The contemporary educator has a challenging role in a modern, pluralistic society where multiple worldviews and prominent cultural traditions influence students' perceptions of their sense of identity and their role as moral participants in a developing world. Many individuals and groups of people in geographically isolated areas still experience the – to them unfamiliar – concept of global citizenship with feelings of doubt, fear, conflict and resistance. The challenge for educators and fellow citizens is to transform the perceptions of the citizens of those communities by creating new understandings of and insight into conflicting situations. Empowerment through knowledge could enable people living in isolated communities to make informed decisions about aspects such as environmental, political and socio-economic affairs, locally and globally. Nussbaum (2002:293) suggests a model for ideal citizenship education with a holistic approach which will produce people with liberated minds free from the bondage of customs and habits with the potential to “function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world”.

Education in Africa, as in many other Southern countries, is still shaped by the damaging experience of colonial domination, followed by a period of “independence” (Dei and Asgharzadeh in Dei & Kempf 2006: 56), heavily influenced by neo-colonial and post-colonial interests and policies of former colonial powers. Abdi, Puplampu and Sefa Dei (2006:23) argue that the African condition is not due to a lack of policies, but rather policy failure in social and education development. Even after twenty years of freedom and democracy in South Africa, social development still reflects the principles of globalisation, defined by Abdi *et al.* as a “re-colonizing force” (*ibid.* p.14) for the latter half of the 20th century. Modern democratic thought requires a particular quality of vision in order to provide the insight for how to deal with a notion of citizenship which fosters diversity and a new perspective of understanding the way in which people might relate to each other in a post-national era. In South Africa, Critical Citizenship Education is challenged by issues such as the continual influence of the Apartheid era; inadequate communication between government and citizens; and misconceptions about cultural diversity (Oloyede 2009:426). Transformation has no value if it is not inspired by the belief that the history of all peoples is meaningful. This transformation of perceptions and attitudes may lead to the achievement of a true critical pedagogy intending the emancipation and transformation of education in South Africa towards a better society (Johnson & Morris 2010:92).

3.3 MONTAGU HIGH SCHOOL CONTEXT

This research was situated in the context of the Visual Arts Class at a public High School in Montagu, during a six-month period over 2014 and 2015. The small rural town of Montagu is located in the Western Cape Province of South Africa, on Route 62, about 180 km from Cape Town. Montagu High School, a Focus School for Mathematics and Science with a learner population of approximately 500 learners, is one of two public high schools in Montagu. The demographic characteristics of the learners were as follows: 51% male, 49% female; 87,5% Afrikaans-speaking, 7% English-speaking and 5,5% Xhosa-speaking; 67,5% Coloured, 27% White and 5,5% Black. The twelve volunteer participants in this research represented the Grade 10, 11 and 12 Visual Arts-learners at Montagu High School. This information is included in table-form as part of the text in Chapter 4, section 4.3 (p.27).

The Montagu High School school-policy strives to promote a learning environment where all learners have equal rights and opportunities to realise their potential on spiritual, academic, cultural as well

as sports domain. The Grade 10, 11 and 12 learners are in the adolescent stage and normally struggle to discover and find their individual identities, while challenged by social interactions of belonging, and developing moral values to enable them to distinguish right from wrong (Illeris 2003:396, 398). Apart from these challenges, learners experience stress related to academic responsibilities and extra-mural activities, as well as conflicting issues in their social lives.

3.4 The Visual Arts module, methodology and description of projects

3.4.1 The Visual Arts module

This module introduces learners to the field of Visual Arts by firstly, conceptualising through the development and realisation of learners' creative ideas; secondly, the making, management of process and presentation of creative artworks; and thirdly, Visual Culture Studies with the emphasis on visual literacy.

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement for Visual Arts (CAPS 2011:8) states that:

"The subject Visual Arts is about self-expression and offers learners a way to engage meaningfully with, and respond to their world. It provides opportunities to stimulate and develop learners' intellect, engaging their creative imagination through visual and tactile experiences and the innovative use of materials and technology in realizing their ideas. It also encourages learners to develop an individual visual language and literacy, which is informed and shaped by the study of visual culture, past and present."

Walder (2007:194) asserts that all educators need to ensure that what we teach will make a positive contribution to the lives of learners, and could be applied to our own sense of what matters to us today. Apart from creative and technical skills, Visual Arts learners should develop problem-solving skills, as well as critical thinking skills, in order to make informed decisions about their subject choices.

The CAPS document for Visual Arts (Department of Education, South Africa 2011:8) proclaims that "The allocated time per week may be utilized only for the minimum required NCS subjects" which, in our teaching context, does not include Visual Arts, "and may not be used for any additional subjects added to the list of minimum subjects. Should a learner wish to offer additional subjects, additional time must be allocated for the offering of these subjects".

The vast amount of subject content learners needed to master within a limited time-frame made it almost impossible for them to become engaged in any related projects which required further research. Instead of enjoying their Visual Arts classes, learners showed signs of stress and frustration. I felt that this was something I could make a difference in by re-thinking my teaching strategies and methods.

3.4.2 Description of class environment and projects

Teaching and learning at High School level has been categorised into specific learning areas (subjects), focus areas (within subjects) and levels of progress (grades). Educators and learners should be encouraged to make innovative connections across subject boundaries. Visual Arts are recognised as a powerful visual language for communicating concepts and theories in any learning area, while promoting the development of creative thinking skills.

The way I have organised my classroom space to accommodate a multi-grade group with language differences, and facilitated the learning process that aimed to benefit all learners, demonstrated how I have tried to apply ideas such as “tolerance, human rights and democracy” (Johnson & Morris 2010:77). Meeting the standards and aims of the FET phase of education, while keeping in mind that the rate of progress to comprehend knowledge is not the same with all learners within a group (especially a multi-grade class) creates tension. Entwistle mentions the awareness of “intelligence and individual differences” and “... the early attempts of Spearman and Pearson to investigate individual differences in the speed and efficiency of learning” (Marton *et al.* 1997:8). Entwistle further suggests that educators should examine learners’ achievements in relation to what is intended, and asserts that “reflective teaching and the quality of learning go hand in hand” (Marton *et al.* 1997:4, 257). As educator I need to reflect on (Schön, 1983) and evaluate the results of each activity in order to maintain the National Education Standards.

Inspired by the Twenty Years of Freedom and Democracy celebrations in 2014, two applied practical projects were devised for the purpose of this research. A limited time-frame determined that these projects had to be integrated with the Grade 10, 11 and 12 Visual Arts curriculum content. Project 1, called “Living Citizenship” explored key concepts such as identity, cultural history, democracy,

equality and citizenship in a teaching and learning context. “Living Citizenship” aimed to uncover the learners’ intuitive understandings about the notion of citizenship: that it does not belong to the past, standing in isolation from everyday life, but that citizenship is a ‘living’ reality and an essential part of human life on earth.

Grade 10-learners investigated the above concepts in Ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman Art with special reference to mythology and the art of storytelling by means of visual images. They read about the role of the artist in society and explored the work of two South African artists: Alexis Preller and Judith Mason. They learnt about surface decoration used in the ancient cultures, with special reference to the mosaic technique. The Grade-10 group employed the mosaic technique to decorate a serving tray with images representing nine of the twenty years of freedom and democracy in South Africa. The end product received an appropriate title: ‘Putting life together piece by piece’. Grade 11-learners explored the work of South African Artists such as Durant Sihlali, Dumile Feni, George Pemba, Paul Emsley and William Kentridge, focusing on socio-economic, cultural and political issues that had been explored as themes for artworks by these artists. The Grade 11-group was responsible for the design and making of ten ceremonial cups decorated with South African symbols representing another ten of the twenty years of freedom and democracy. Grade 12 -topics included post-1994 Democratic Identity in South Africa focusing on the work of Cape Town-based artists Hasan and Husain Essop, and identity in international art, referring to Iranian-born artist Shirin Neshat and Cai Guo-Qiang, a contemporary Chinese-born artist currently living in New York. The year 2014 was represented by the Grade 12-learner who acted as the ‘reporter’ documenting both the progress and outcome of the practical stage of Project 1 with his camera. The learners’ Visual Culture Study topics suggested by the CAPS Curriculum served as a background and were integrated with this project to add meaning and significance.

After our first project, almost five months passed during which the participants in this research (Grade 10, 11 and 12 Visual Arts-learners), including myself (educator and researcher), have experienced change and development on various levels: cognitive and technical. For all of us, the year 2014 had been a life changing journey, hence the theme of Project 2: “Life – a changing journey”, which investigated the impact of globalisation on the culture of the participants. The main aim of this project was to create greater awareness of the interconnectedness of social and global changes. Project 2 also attempted to uncover different ways of understanding change and cultural specificity. The educational process in the Visual Arts class was directly linked to real life situations in

context. These included learner engagement in Visual Culture Studies; participation in the annual Youth Arts Festival; the experience of being awarded for outstanding achievements; having the opportunity to view African beadwork which still forms part of Xhosa family customs; communicating by means of 'Whats App', 'facebook' and 'Skype'. Doolittle & Tech (1999:4) notes that "social interaction always occurs within a socio-cultural context, resulting in knowledge that is bound to a specific time and place".

Project 3 followed as an introduction to Visual Culture Studies during the first term of 2015. This project investigated the role of 'popular culture' and 'contemporary art'. The purpose of this project was to help learners think critically about their lives, communities, ideas, emotions and values. During the conceptualising phase of Project 3, the learners had to critically question the meaning of the term, 'community'. They had to consider where their community is situated and who forms part of their community, keeping in mind that many of them have two communities. For instance, one could be their school environment, including the school hostel where they live during the week; the other, their farming community where they spend time with their families during weekends.

These devised projects provided learners with multiple opportunities for developing new insights and to reflect on how their personal worlds might "be implicated in broader worlds" (Gaudelius & Speirs 2001:199). Independent research assignments, followed by inter-active group discussions have provided an open-ended approach (Gaudelius & Speirs 2001; Hannafin 1999) to art education which attempted to satisfy the objectives mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.1 (p.6). The availability and use of computer technology inspired an awareness that the classroom does not have to be an isolated "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger 1998), but formed part of a local and global community.

Apart from being a valuable source of data for this research, the information from the three devised projects was used to assess learners' understandings and thereby assist learner development in order to improve the process of teaching and learning. Informal assessment in the form of group - discussions focused on the learners' ability to integrate newly-constructed knowledge with relevant content in their learner guides (text books). These inter-active discussions involved visual literacy exercises, case studies and a design proposal for a public artwork. I have guided the learners to provide their own solutions, instead of imposing my ideas on them. (CAPS, Department of Education, South Africa 2011:13).

‘Literacy’ usually describes the ability to read and write, but it can also refer to the ability to ‘read’ visual information other than words, such as signs, symbols and images. The abundance of images in our culture – in newspapers and magazines, in advertising, on television, and on the Web – makes visual literacy a vital skill. The first level of visual literacy is fundamental knowledge: basic identification of the subject or elements in the artwork, photograph, etc. While accurate observation is important, understanding what we see and comprehending visual relationships are equally important. These higher-order visual literacy skills require critical thinking and are essential in understanding any content area where information is conveyed through visual formats such as charts and maps. Visual images take on many forms. Therefore, while planning the Visual Literacy assessment exercise for Project 3, I decided to use a ‘non-art’ object, namely a Coca-Cola can with the name ‘Raj’ printed on the side as part of an advertising campaign. The Coca-Cola can was placed in the centre of our discussion table, first on a white A4 folio, and later on a rectangular prism which represented a museum plinth. A semi-structured questionnaire guided our introductory discussion on the function of formal art elements and design principles, and the subsequent identification and application thereof on the Coca-Cola can. Against the background of ‘Popular culture’ and ‘contemporary art’, the learners were challenged to consider the Coca-Cola can – one of the most visible expressions of globalisation – as an artwork. A second challenge followed, asking the learners whether it would make any difference to their perceptions of recognising and interpreting an artwork, if the Coca-Cola can was elevated and exhibited on a museum plinth. These questions activated a lively debate involving opposing viewpoints. Free-spoken opinions were encouraged, giving the learners the opportunity to express their ideas openly. Finally, learners had to devise a design for a public artwork, inspired by the Coca-Cola can. Please refer to ADDENDUM B (p.91) to view examples of artworks relating to Project 1, 2 and 3.

In this chapter I have discussed the context of my research: Critical Citizenship Education in a global, African and South African context; the FET phase of Visual Arts education as a field of study, and Montagu High School as institutional context. Aims and objectives of the current CAPS Curriculum (Department of Education, South Africa 2011) were discussed, while the research methodology used in this research is discussed in the next chapter. Chapter 4 (p.25) presents the research methodology, comprising the design of the study, sample selection and data collection, data capturing and ethical considerations, as well as data analysis, validity and trustworthiness.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

I worked within an interpretive research paradigm and followed the case study research design for the empirical part of my study. A case study design was chosen because the research was based on the experiences and observed interaction between the participants in this research and myself in a real-life situation. Inquiry is a natural human activity and it is when we make meaning through direct experience that we are able to make observations and look for patterns of regularities in what we observe (Babbie 2010:27; Mouton 2001:138). Firstly, I focus on the design of my study, which included the following aspects: the research approach and paradigm; research design; sample selection and data collection; capturing of data and ethical considerations; data analysis; and validity and trustworthiness.

4.2 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The following sections present an explanation of the research approach, research paradigm and research design.

4.2.1 Research approach and research paradigm

For this research I worked within an interpretive approach based on the assumptions that (1) the nature of knowing and reality is based on relativist ontology, assuming that reality as we know it is constructed inter-subjectively through the meanings and understandings developed socially and experientially (Allsup 2003:167); (2) it is a transactional or subjectivist epistemology, assuming that we cannot separate ourselves from what we know – the researcher and the object of research are linked in such a way that who we are and how we understand the world is a central part of how we understand ourselves, others and the world; (3) the interpretive approach assumes that the researcher's values are inherent in all phases of the research process; (4) findings emerge as the research proceeds and conflicting interpretations are negotiated among the participants in the

research; (5) practical consequences and moral concerns are important considerations when evaluating interpretive science; (6) active dialogue between the researcher (educator) and the participants (learners) is critical for the creation of a more informed and sophisticated understanding of the research topic; and (7) all interpretations are located in a particular context and time. Understandings are open to re-interpretation and negotiation through dialogue.

In order to define a research paradigm, I considered the following three questions suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985:218): (1) What is the nature and form of reality? (2) What is the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the object of research? (3) How can we come to know that reality?

In the interpretive approach, reality is based on a relative ontology, assuming that what we know and what we experience is constructed inter-subjectively between people as time goes on. Therefore, the meaning of the interpretive approach is a dynamic, ever-changing construct, in which meanings and understandings are developed socially and experientially (Allsup 2003:159).

The interpretive approach is also based on subjectivist epistemology, which assumes that we cannot detach ourselves from our knowledge, beliefs and opinions. This does not mean that there is no reality outside our minds; it suggests that we select and edit the reality we see to conform to our beliefs about what sort of world we live in (Mouton 2001:138; Bateson 1987:177). This research was based on a class situation. Therefore, according to the interpretive approach, my values as researcher (and educator) were inherent in all phases of the research process. The researcher and the object of research were linked in such a way that our identities and understandings of the world directly influenced our understandings of the 'self' and 'others' who share our world.

The relevance of the interpretive approach to this research drew on the fact that findings were subjective, based on experience, and open to re-interpretation and negotiation through active dialogue. Both Lowenfeld (1975:5) and Bateson argue that knowledge which is constructed through the senses, "can become knowledge in the mind" (1987:143).

This research employed qualitative methods which assumed that understandings were socially constructed and created from within, and for a specific group and situation (Zuber-Skerrit 2001:7).

Conflicting interpretations were negotiated through active dialogue between the researcher (educator) and the participants (Visual Arts learners) in order to collaboratively construct meaningful reality. My role as researcher was not to generalise the findings for multiple contexts, but to reflect on this particular case study as truthfully as possible. Insight in the perceptions of my Visual Arts learners could have had the result that my newly constructed knowledge and understandings could be applied to improve my teaching methodologies to the benefit of the participants involved in this research.

4.2.2 Research design

A case study research design was used for the empirical part of this research. Compared to other methods, the strength of the case study research design is its ability “to examine, in-depth a ‘case’ within its ‘real-life’ context” (Yin, 1994:2). The case study method helps the researcher to make direct observations and collect data in natural settings (*ibid.* p.3). Case studies are usually qualitative in nature and aim to provide an in-depth description of a small number of cases (Mouton 2001:149). My research was based on observing the experiences of the Visual Arts-learners in their Visual Arts class environment. The context of the case study was taken into account by looking at the Visual Arts, FET phase and the current CAPS curriculum. The aim of the three devised projects was to investigate new understandings of concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship in a teaching and learning environment.

4.3 SAMPLE SELECTION AND DATA COLLECTION

The participants in this research were the Grade 10, 11 and 12 Visual Arts -learners at Montagu High School in the Western Cape. The composition of this volunteer group was diverse regarding age, grade, culture, gender, race, and language orientation. Demographic characteristics of the participants involved in this study are included in table-form. Please refer to Tables 4.1 and 4.2 (p.28).

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of the learners involved in this research in **2014** (Projects 1 and 2)

Grade	Gender	Race	Home Language	Learner
10	F	White	A	10FWA1
10	F	White	A	10FWA2
10	F	White	E	10FWE3
11	F	White	A	11FWA4
11	F	White	A	11FWA5
11	F	Xhosa	X /E /A	11FXE6
11	F	Coloured	A	11FCA7
11	F	White	A / E	11FWE8
12	M	White	A	12MWA9

Table 4.2: Demographic characteristics of the learners involved in this research in **2015** (Project 3)

Grade	Gender	Race	Home Language	Learner
10	F	White	A	10FWA10
10	F	White	A	10FWA11
10	M	White	A	10MWA12
10	M	White	E	10MWE13
11	F	White	A	11FWA1
11	F	White	A	11FWA2
11	F	White	E	11FWE3
12	F	White	A	12FWA4
12	F	White	A	12FWA5
12	F	Xhosa	X /E /A	12FXE6
12	F	Coloured	A	12FCA7
12	F	White	A / E	12FWE8

I employed learners' reflections as the main source of data in the case study, but also conducted individual conversations and group discussions with the participants in this project. Data for this research was also gathered through semi-structured questionnaires. By adding further notes, drawings, photographs and thoughts, a more holistic picture of learners' viewpoints and understandings was presented. I also included reflections of my own learning and teaching experience.

Documentation of learners' reflections was further reconstructed on a computer and presented in the form of a Word Document. Colour photographs were taken to record the conceptualisation process of practical work. Visual information in the form of drawings and conceptualising exercises are stored as a PowerPoint Presentation. Additional copies are stored on a back-up hard drive in the Visual Arts classroom at Montagu High School. All interviews, discussions and practical work took place in the Visual Arts classroom at Montagu High School.

4.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical clearance in the form of a consent document for participation in research was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee: Division for Research Development of Stellenbosch University. All learners who voluntarily participated in the research signed a consent form. Due to the fact that most of the issues under discussion in this research form part of the basic curriculum, no concrete risks to the participants had been foreseen. However, to protect both parties in this research – the researcher and the participants – consent had been obtained from all the learners involved, as well as from their parents, who were assured of confidentiality (Please refer to ADDENDUM C, p.95). To protect the identities of the learners, their names were not revealed. Instead, a code was allocated to each. The information that was provided by the learners will be kept confidential.

4.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The coding process in this qualitative research project started with an initial reading of the documentation of data obtained from the Visual Arts learners on three occasions during their 2014 and 2015 school years. A framework was applied to the data. When I read through the collected data, I used the concepts identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship, which had been discussed in the projects as a framework. I identified the quotes from learners that linked with identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship to attain an understanding of their perceptions of these concepts. Each of the main themes also produced sub-themes, because a concept such as identity involved different aspects.

The inductive content analysis method was employed with a difference in that a framework was applied before the process of analysis took place. Inductive content analysis is a process which guides the researcher in identifying themes and sub-themes (Creswell 2005:238; Mouton 2001:148). Please refer to the description of this process presented in Figure 4.1.

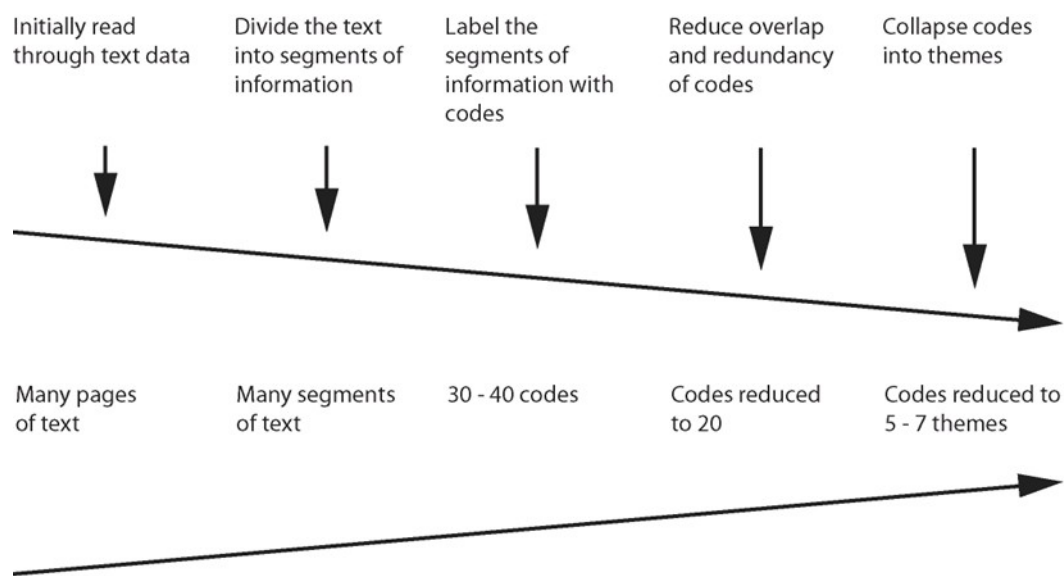


Figure 4.1: The coding process in qualitative research (from Creswell 2005:238).

A preliminary analysis of the data collected from the first two practical projects made me realise that further information was needed in order to get a more complete picture of the learners' understandings. A third practical project was therefore devised at the beginning of 2015, which focused on 'popular culture' and 'contemporary art'. Rubin and Rubin (1995:226-227) argue that "data analysis begins while the interviews are still underway". In this research, carefully planned interactive discussion sessions were interspersed between the different stages of each of the three practical projects to verify whether my analysis of learners' reflections was accurate. Documentation of learners' reflections as well as photographic records of artwork were valuable resources when I started the formal analysis process. Chapter 5 (p.32) presents the findings and provides a discussion of the empirical investigation.

4.6 VALIDITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Qualitative data is often criticised for being subjective, particular and therefore not considered as trustworthy. I employed the following criteria described by Lincoln and Guba (1985:300) to guide the validity and trustworthiness of the qualitative data in my research: (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, and (4) conformability. I will briefly explain the meaning and application of the four criteria mentioned above.

In my research, credibility was enhanced by using a variety of data collection methods, namely semi-structured work books, visual diaries, group discussions and individual conversations. Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of a research project can be generalised or transferred to other contexts. This research, because it took place in a specific context, cannot be transferred directly to other contexts and therefore I provided a clear description of the research context in Chapter 3 (p.18).

Dependability emphasises the need for the researcher to keep a record of the ever-changing context within which research occurs. Any changes that may influence the results of the research, e.g. a participant who withdraws from the research group, should be documented. Conformability refers to the assumption that the qualitative researcher brings a unique perspective to the investigation, and the degree to which the results of the research could be confirmed or authenticated by others. My role as educator (researcher) was to guide and facilitate the research process in order to provide for and encourage multiple perspectives and representations of the learning content. Furthermore, I have attempted to describe the particular case as truthfully as possible and with as little bias as possible.

In this chapter I have discussed the methodology used for the research. A case study research design was chosen for the empirical part of this qualitative study and I used the inductive content analysis process. In the next chapter I present the data collected from the research during 2014 and 2015, as well as a discussion of the data.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of my research was to investigate new understandings of Critical Citizenship Education in a teaching and learning environment. Working with the school, class and curriculum in which I am already involved, learners' personal understandings about concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship were investigated. Three practical projects were devised in the situated learning environment of the Visual Arts class to create an opportunity for the learners participating in this research to engage with the notion of critical citizenship. All three practical projects were collaborative in nature (Fenwick 2001:49) and the aim was to uncover which new understandings the learners could create about the above -mentioned concepts and their associated meanings, rather than what I (researcher / educator) could tell them.

In this chapter I present and discuss the data gathered from three devised practical projects, aiming (a) to identify the reactions of the Visual Arts learners to concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship; (b) to establish what the Visual Arts learners' reactions to the concepts say about their knowledge and experience of Critical Citizenship Education; and (c) to establish what their reaction to the concepts reveal about their immediate and broader context.

5.2 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Reflections in the following paragraphs mainly focus on learners' understandings about concepts of identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship. These concepts formed part of the three practical projects that were devised. During this research some learners developed the ability to reflect on these concepts in a rich way, supporting their opinions by relevant visual references, while the reflections of other learners showed only superficial comprehension. Themes and concepts in the following discussion are interrelated and therefore overlap in some areas. Learners' quotes are presented in their original form, and translations appear as foot notes where necessary. I have employed the coding system presented in Chapter 4, Section 4.3 (p.28), which presents the demographic characteristics of the learners.

The structure for presenting and discussing data are, firstly, the themes and sub-themes that are briefly introduced. Next, learners' reflections are presented, followed by a discussion referring to related theoretical perspectives, as well as my own comments on the learners' understandings. Analysing these findings was a constructive exercise and provided useful information for possible further research. The description of the devised practical projects presented in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.2 (p.21-24), should be seen as a background for data presented in the following sections. I refer to these projects where necessary.

5.2.1 IDENTITY

Ideas about identity developed as a process which refers back to the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods in Europe, where developments in knowledge, beliefs and philosophies as well as cultural, social and political changes led to new ways of reflecting on the experience of being human and considering the individual's place in the world, a tendency clearly marked by portrait painting in art. Gradually, the use of words such as "identity" and "consciousness" gained importance to describe the awareness of being both human and recognisably different in nature from other human beings. Learners reflected on the various aspects of their identities and explained how these aspects helped to form their unique perceptions.

5.2.1.1 Personal identity and understanding of self

Ideas about selfhood are affected by a wide range of beliefs and experiences. In Western nations there is a tendency to think of identity as what separates us from others. Personal identity forms the basis of most of our physical and emotional interactions with other people.

Regarding personal identity, learner 10FWA1 said,

"Dit begin met die dag van jou geboorte. Die omgewing waarin jy groot gemaak is, jou opvoeding, agtergrond, jou ervarings en blootstelling. Hoe jy dinge sien en hanteer. Jou identiteit en wat jy ken en weet weerspieël jou lewe en leefstyl. Uniekheid, want ons almal verskil en is/het 'n ongelooflike identiteit op ons eie." ¹

¹ It starts on the day of your birth [and includes] the environment where you were raised, your education, your background, your experiences and those elements you were exposed to; how you view things and deal with issues. Your

Learner 10FWA2 also remarked that:

“Dit is wie ek is. My persoonlikheid. My identiteit word deur my familie, vriende en onderwysers bepaal. My familie laat my toe om my talente te ontwikkel tot die beste van my vermoë. Hulle ondersteun jou en leer jou van reg en verkeerd. Vriende ondersteun jou. Dit wat jou onderwysers vir jou sê, kan ‘n groot impak op jou karakter hê. Jy neem baie van ander se positiewe eienskappe om jou identiteit te vorm sodat jy uniek is.”²

Learner 10FWE3 said,

“My friends, culture, environment and my interests like ballet, art, drama construct my identity as an individual.”

This learner further commented,

“Die onderwysers kan begin om al die leerders se name te leer en almal as ‘individu’ te behandel.”³

Learner 10 FWE3 continued, saying,

“To me identity is what signifies us. It is what makes us unique. No two people in this world look the same or have the same personalities. Identity is what gives us dreams and passions. What I mean by that, is that everyone has their own muse or passion. If we were all the same and had the same dreams, the world would be a pretty boring place.”

Learner 11FWA4 said,

“Ek bepaal my identiteit. My optrede en keuses maak my die mens wie ek is. Dit bepaal hoe my medemens my sien en hoe ek myself sien, of ek respek vir myself kan hê en dan ook vir ander en ‘n positiewe bydrae in my samelewing kan [leef]. Individualiteit en kreatiwiteit is die asem van ons mense. Ek glo dat daar ‘n gebrek aan kreatiwiteit in die samelewing is.”⁴

Learner 11FWA5 described her identity as follows:

“Kunstig; [dit] help my om ‘n persoon te wees met kreatiewe denke. Hou daarvan om met nommers te werk, [dit] gee aan my die eienskap dat ek nie ‘n persoon is wat net alles aanvaar nie, ek ontleed

identity and knowledge reflect your life and lifestyle. Uniqueness, because we all differ and possess an amazing individual identity.

² It [my identity] determines my personality and who I am. My identity is determined by my family, friends, educators, etc. My family allows me to develop my talents to the best of my abilities. They support me and teach me about right and wrong. Friends support me. Educators’ comments may have a huge influence on a learner’s character. One employs a great deal of other people’s positive characteristics to shape your own identity, in order to be unique.

³ The educators may start memorising the learners’ names in order to treat each one as an individual.

⁴ I determine my own identity. My behaviour and decisions shape me into the person I am. It determines the way my peers see me and how I see myself; whether I have self-respect and respect other people, and making a positive contribution in my community. Individuality and creativity are the breath of our people. I believe that society lacks creativity.

eers iets waaroor ek onseker is. Ek hou van musiek; dit gee my die eienskap dat ek altyd na die dieper betekenis wil kyk en luister.”⁵

Learner 11FCA7 wrote,

“My identiteit word bepaal deur wie ek is, waar my woning is en wie/hoe my voorouers was en ook my kultuur. My kultuur is ‘n kenmerk van my, ek lewe volgens my kultuur / geloof; ek lewe volgens sekere standaarde en dié maak my deel van my kultuurgroep / geloofsgroep. Dit is die grootste kenmerk van my identiteit.”⁶

Learner 11FWE8 asserted,

“My personality, likes and dislikes, the things I talk about, and the things I do all contribute to my identity as human being.” [Therefore identity is] “who you are as a person; the things that define you.”

Learner 12MWA9 said,

“Hoe ek lyk, my DNA en persoonlikheid. Waar ek grootword, die gemeenskap met wie ek te doen kry, beïnvloed my en maak my soos ek is.”⁷

Learner 11FWE8 remarked,

“Self-expression is using my identity to make art. Art plays a huge part in my life and I have used it many times to try and understand myself.”

5.2.1.2 Social identity

How we think of ourselves, our beliefs and personal characteristics enable us to relate to our environment and the people among whom we live.

⁵ Artistic; [it] helps me to be a creative thinking person. [I] like to work with numbers, they characterize me as a person who does not accept everything, I first analyse things that puzzle me. I like music, because it characterises me as someone who always wants to hear and see the deeper meaning.

⁶ My identity determines who I am, where I live, my ancestors, as well as my culture. My culture characterises me, and I live according to certain cultural and religious standards that emphasise my ‘belonging’ to my cultural and religious groups. That is the most important characteristic of my identity.

⁷ My appearance, my DNA and [my] personality. Where I grew up, the community with which I interact, influence me to be the way I am.

Learner 11FWA8 said,

...“the people closest to you, whom you care about the most. Family is not limited to relationship through blood, but through love.”

Learner 11FXE6 said,

[“F]amily is one of the most important things in my life. Family is what shapes us and helps us in life. Even when you’re having a terrible day you can always count on your family to be there.” ...“Being an artist, is never an easy thing, because you are kind of different from the normal uncreative human beings. You dress differently, you talk, walk or even write differently. To you that is a cool thing, but for the rest to accept that is kind of a long journey of “acceptance”.

Learner 11FWA4 remarked,

“Dit bepaal hoe my medemens my sien en hoe ek myself sien; of ek respek vir myself kan hê en dan ook vir ander en ‘n positiewe bydrae in my samelewing kan maak. Individualiteit en kreatiwiteit is die asem van ons mense. Ek glo dat daar ‘n gebrek aan kreatiwiteit in die samelewing is.”⁸

Learner 12FWE8 (2015) said,

“People hide their ‘real’ identities beneath standards that society has set.”

5.2.1.3 Cultural identity

When two or more cultures interact in a multi-cultural context such as South Africa we become aware of the differences between cultures (whether they are based on language, religion or race), as well as of their similarities.

Learner 11FXE6 said,

“My culture, the language that I speak not only tells you more about me, but also about where I come from. My hobbies can also tell you what kind of person I am, my likes and dislikes and what I am interested in.”

Learner 10 FWE3 felt that culture plays a big part in our identity.

⁸ It determines the way my peers see me and how I see myself; whether I can have self-respect and can make a positive contribution for other people in my community. Individuality and creativity are the breath of our people. I believe that society lacks creativity.

"In a way one's culture is part of your identity. Muslims and Christians have different gods and beliefs. That affects their views on life and that would be part of their culture."

Learner 11FXE6 commented,

"And my identity is also kind of my culture, Xhosa, and the skate-culture as well as the 'swag-culture'."

5.2.1.4 The past and identity

Past events have a significant impact on people's present and future identities. The inability to deal with negative events could restrain the achievement of personal desires and goals.

Learner 11FWA4 called her visual representation "TIME CAPSULE". She drew her inspiration from various sources which formed part of her life at that moment. She said,

"Ek voel dat die wêreld oor kennis gaan. Mense moet kennis put uit die foute van die verlede."⁹

[She continued, saying,] "Ons voorouers het foute gemaak sodat ons daaruit kan leer, nie dit herhaal nie. Dus, dit is 'n persoonlike en wêreldwye kwessie wat vir my baie beteken. Ons moet uit ons voorvaders se foute leer."¹⁰

Learner 11FWE3 (2015) remarked,

"If we do not know what happened in the past, how can we learn from the mistakes that we made. Choosing to be ignorant to the past, will not be beneficial to anyone."

5.2.1.5 Discussion: IDENTITY

The direct quotes recorded above represent reflections by Grade 10, 11 and 12 Visual Arts learners on the concept of identity, a term described by Erikson as a "conceptual innovation appropriated by popular culture." (Erikson, E.H. 1968: 15-25). Sub-themes that emerged, were: Personal identity, Social identity, Cultural identity, and The past and identity.

⁹ In my opinion, the world is about knowledge. People need to learn from the mistakes from the past.

¹⁰ We should learn from our ancestors' mistakes, rather than repeating them. This issue is of great value to me, on a personal as well as a global level. We should learn from our ancestors' mistakes.

Although many different viewpoints (and understandings) about various aspects of their identities were given, most learners agreed that personal identity is constructed by the individual's personality, culture, language, gender, environment, family, friends, education, knowledge, religion, interests, likes and dislikes. Kincheloe (2005:6 -7) emphasises how the self-image, world-views and perspectives on education of both educators and learners are shaped by the nature of their social-political environment.

Learners 10FWA1 and 10FWA2 noted that we are all different, each with our unique personal identity, while learner 11FWA4 felt that she determines her own identity by means of her behaviour and decisions. This approach recalls the famous saying by Descartes (1596-1650), "I think, therefore I am", which he in a later statement extended to "I exist, therefore I am", as well as the quote by Leymah Gbowee, "I am what I am because of who we all are." This also relates to the concept of Ubuntu, signifying "we are therefore I am", described by Archbishop Desmond Tutu (2004:26) as the "essence of being human".

In terms of our individual identity, Greenfield (2012:2) highlights the prefrontal cortex as the key brain region that shows a huge "quantitative difference" between our species and the rest of the animal kingdom. Greenfield further explains how human behaviour and human character in the formation of human identity, is determined by chemical changes in the prefrontal cortex. Greenfield asserts that this area of the brain is only fully active in the late adolescent phase, which explain the tendency of highly emotional and excitable adolescents to be "more reactive to the outside world and to sensations rather than inner 'cognitive' thought processes" (*ibid.*). This knowledge will promote better understanding of teenage behaviour and help educators to act as empathetic professionals (Yip 2007:289). Learners 10FWA2 and 10FWE3 suggested that teachers could make a contribution towards democracy (human rights) by learning the students' names and addressing them as 'individuals'. Teachers' comments could have a profound impact on an individual's character. The responsibility of the teacher to therefore treat all learners equally is of utmost importance. Learners 10FWA2 and 11FWA4 explained that an individual's identity may be influenced by other people's positive characteristics, and emphasized the positive contribution a person could also make in his or her community.

Eckhart Tolle (2005) describes our sense of identity (the 'self ') as something which is reduced to a story we keep telling ourselves in our minds. He refers to the term 'awakening' (Greene 1995:48),

which has been used since ancient times as a kind of metaphor to describe the transformation of human consciousness. He suggests that the ultimate power of human existence is to bring the power of consciousness or awareness (Freire 1970:90), which is concealed within the present moment, into this world. Learner 11FWA4 referred to individuality and creativity as the 'breath of our people'. Breathing equals life. Mindful breathing could be calming and energising, fostering clear thought. Tolle suggests that all humans are potentially capable of living in a state of spiritual enlightenment through the power of the present moment. This refers to a state where one perceives and interacts with the world through quietness, not through mentally repeating one's thoughts all the time and thus losing oneself in the mind and in the world.

Self-expression is regarded as integral part of a learner's democratic rights. Learner 11FWE8 claims that self-expression means using her identity to make art and that art may be employed to enhance personal understandings. Learners 11FWA4 and 11FWA5 described artistic skills and creativity as elements of individual identity, and emphasised the lack of creativity in society. Artists often use portraits to show what is going on in the mind and make statements about identity. A feeling of being different, of 'other-ness' was expressed by Learner 11FXE6, not because of her race, but rather because of an artistic personality that seemed to engender a desire for acceptance and belonging to a peer group that does not share her interest in creative activities.

Individuals may have multiple identities (Atkinson 2001:307), asserting different identities in different social circumstances. Project 1 (2014) provided a new opportunity for Learner 12MWA9 to transform his learner-identity through a learning process by performing the role of 'reporter', documenting both the progress and outcome of the practical part of this project with his camera. This experience recalled a comment by Learner 11FWE8 who claimed that our identities are subjected to change over time as we encounter more things and our situations change. Boud and Walker (1991), as well as Dewey (1938), encouraged active interaction between an individual and his social environment, as well as the ability to integrate (Fenwick 2001:11) new experiences with previously constructed knowledge. Dewey (1938) emphasised that, although experiential learning may lead to modification of previously constructed knowledge, not all experience educates.

Both Woodward (2004) and Buckingham (2008:6) reflected on social identity as a practical accomplishment which involves an individual's ongoing personal interaction with other people and the environment. Buckingham (2008) further argues that a focus on identity requires us to pay close

attention to the influence of media and technologies in everyday life, and the consequences thereof for individuals and for social groups. The participants (learners) in this research are all adolescents who were in the process of discovering and finding their individual identities, while struggling to overcome challenges of social interaction, belonging, and developing moral values to distinguish right from wrong (Illeris 2003:396, 398).

Cultural identity was described by the learners as a feeling of 'belonging to' a nation, ethnic group, religion, social class, generation, locality and any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. In this way, cultural identity is both characteristic of the individual (Learners 10 FWE3 and 11FX6), but also of the culturally identical group that has its members sharing the same cultural identity (Ennaji 2005). The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) recognises the importance of a shared national identity and a sense of belonging, and the value of cultural, social and ethnic diversity. South Africa is called the rainbow nation because it is made up of so many diverse cultures. However, strong cultural identity expressed in the wrong way can contribute to establishing barriers between groups which may lead to feelings of disrespect and intolerance. It is important to promote and be proud of our South African culture and identity. This helps South Africans to understand and respect each other and to learn from each other's cultural practices. This is part of the healing that democracy has brought after culture was used to divide South Africans in the past. Learner 11FWA4 suggested that we should learn from our ancestors' mistakes instead of repeating them. For this reason the government has a project called "Proudly South African" that encourages South African citizens to value one another and the country. Although the learners did not reflect on "national identity" in particular, some references to loyalty and patriotism underpinned the idea.

In this research process I had to balance my 'adult-learner identity' (Brookfield 1995, Cranton 1996:228) with my identities as researcher and educator in order to facilitate "a learning situation that is both democratic ... and promotes critical reflection." (Taylor 1998:49). Yip (2007:295) advised educators "to be conscious and critical" in order to develop a "more competent, flexible, sensitive and versatile" approach when dealing with the diverse identities of the learners. Yip (ibid.2001:295) continued, warning educators not to lose their identity within the social system in the process of "making meaning of the experiences in consciousness and reality." Being an educator is more than a career, it is a way of living; a transformation process which forms part of my journey to become the person I am not yet. Fenwick (2001:20) argues that an individual's (working) context involves both the social relations and the political-cultural dimensions of the community in which the individual is

involved. It further involves the nature of the occupation, the network of interactions in which the individual's choices and behaviours are trapped, the language and cultural beliefs through which the individual makes meaning of the whole situation, and the historical, temporal, and spatial location of the situation. (Lefebvre 1991; Foucault 1991; Giddens 1984). Although Mezirow (1991), in a revised form of his theory, recognised the social context in which adult learning is situated, Taylor (1998) suggested that Mezirow failed to maintain the connection between the construction of knowledge and the context within which it is interpreted.

5.2.2 Culture

This section presents learners' understandings of 'culture', a concept referring to the attitudes, customs and beliefs that distinguish one group of people from another. They had to explain what responsibilities teachers and schools have as shapers of cultural, social and political understandings.

5.2.2.1 Cultural history and heritage

Cultural heritage refers to those things or expressions that show the creativity of a nation, which may include monuments, sculptures, paintings, cave dwellings, and architecture, or anything important because of its history, or artistic or scientific value.

Learners 11FXE6 and 11FCA7 referred to previous generations, ancestors and great grandparents as determining factors of an individual's cultural history. Learner 11FXE6 said,

"I think that a person's cultural history is determined by their great grandparents and their ancestors, who they were and what culture they were."

Learner 11FCA7 continued, saying,

"Die onderwysers leer die kinders van die geskiedenis, maar nie genoeg nie." ¹¹

¹¹ Teachers educate children about the history, but not enough.

Learner 11FWE8 said,

“A person’s cultural history becomes part of them, how they see the work they do. Our identities change over time as we experience more things and our circumstances change, but our history is still the same.”

Learner 10 FWE3 commented,

“The term ‘Cultural history’ refers to both an academic discipline and to its subject matter. This connects to the learning process in the class with the academic discipline. All that we have come through like ‘apartheid’, etc. ‘belongs’ to us as our history.”

Learner 11FWE3 (2015) and 11FWA1 (2015) both reflected on the question whether the removal of historical statues will change people’s hostile emotions towards the past. Learner 11FWE3 (2015) said,

“I feel that changing street names and removing monuments cannot physically change the past. But I think it will change our level of knowledge about our history. I only learnt about Cecil John Rhodes when I saw the statue – I did not learn about him at school.”

Learner 11FWA1 answered,

“Nee, dit kan nie. Net omdat ons iets wat ons aan die verlede herinner verwyder, beteken nie dat ons die verlede verwyder nie. Die emosionele littekens bly daar, al sien ons nie meer die herinnering [in die geval van die standbeelde] nie.” ¹²

Learner 12FXE6 said,

“Monuments are peoples’ voices to me, the voice of history; the voices of certain individuals in the past and the impact they have in our lives today.”

Learner 12FXE6 further commented on the controversial nature of public art works, by saying:

“The way certain objects and individuals of the past are represented in monuments or artworks, will determine the way how people will also see the past.”

¹² No, it will not. Just because we want to remove something which reminds us of the past, does not mean that we will remove the past. The emotional scars still remain, although we do not see the memories (statues) anymore.

5.2.2.2 Culture versus no culture

Learners 10FWE3, 11FWA2 and 11FCA4 reflected on the distinctive cultural traditions of ethnic groups which form part of the South African Rainbow Nation. Learner 11FCA4 argued,

“We don’t have a real culture with traditions like the Zulu or Xhosa people.”

Learner 11FWA2 commented,

“Die enigste Afrikaanse kultuur waarvan ek weet is die Voortrekkers met hulle ossewaens. Ek sien myself nie as ‘n Voortrekker tannie met ‘n lang rok en kappie nie.”¹³

Learner 10FWE3 said,

“Although my name carry [sic] a special meaning for my mom and dad, we do not have any particular customs or traditions in our family.”

Learner 11FWE8 brought new perspectives to the concept of ‘culture’ by referring to art culture as

... “the sum of all forms of art; an expression by the world in different ways.”

Art for her becomes an integral part of culture. This learner further defined gaming culture as

“the people who call themselves ‘gamers’. It’s a world of imagination.”

Learner 11FWA2 (2015) linked the topic of cultural traditions to current protest actions against historical statues in South Africa by saying:

“Dit herinner mens aan die Futuriste (1909-1914) wat alle skakels met die verlede wou breek. Dada en Surrealisme was albei protesbewegings wat die tydperk tussen die twee wêreld- oorloë domineer het en die tradisionele waardes van die samelewing (moreel, godsdienstig, polities) bevraagteken het. Dada as internasionale protesbeweging (1916-1922) wou alle tradisies in kuns verwoes.”¹⁴

¹³ The only Afrikaans culture I know about is the Voortrekkers with their ox wagons. I do not associate myself with a Voortrekker woman wearing a long dress and (Voortrekker) “kappie”.

¹⁴ It recalls the Futurists (1909-1914) who wanted to destroy all links with the past. Both Dada and Surrealism were protest -movements, dominating the period between the two world wars, while questioning the traditional values of society (moral values, religious and political). Dada, as an international protest movement (1916-1922) wanted to destroy all art traditions.

5.2.2.3 Slaves to culture

‘Slaves to culture’ refers to a situation where the beliefs established by a cultural norm are accepted as good and right without critical questioning, insight or logic.

Learner 11FWA1 (2015) said,

“Diegene wat in opstand kom oor die standbeelde en wat dit verteenwoordig, het nie in die Apartheids-era groot geword nie. Die meeste van hulle is studente wie se opinies gebaseer is op wat vir hulle vertel word deur dié wat wel deel was. Jy kan nie jou identiteit bepaal op grond van ander se ervaring nie.”¹⁵

Learner 12FWE8 (2015) reflected on a practical assignment entitled ‘Slaves to Culture, Masters of Fate’:

“I chose this title as I want this work to reflect upon modern society and its people. We are slaves to a culture we created: [to] get married, have kids, get a good job, buy this fancy phone, this is the car you should own, etc. After all this, though, we are still masters of our own destiny or fate. We can become astronauts or artists, mechanics or doctors, whatever we want to be, we can be it.”

5.2.2.4 Cultural diversity

The term ‘cultural diversity’ is often used to refer to the external manifestations of culture in terms of language, dress, beliefs and rituals. In effect, it describes a specific way of life, and way of thinking or acting that characterise a cultural group.

Learner 10FWA1 reflected on ‘cultural diversity’ by suggesting the possibility of conflict occurring in multi-cultural class groups.

“Dit [kulturele verskeidenheid] is wat jy ken en ervaar het deur blootstelling. Die verskeidenheid kan mekaar aanvul en bots, aangesien daar in ‘n klaskamer opset verskillende kulture saam is.”¹⁶

¹⁵ Those who protest against the statues and what they represent, did not grow up in the Apartheid era. Most of them are students whose opinions are based upon the narratives of those who actually were part. You cannot build your identity upon the experience of others.

¹⁶ You gain knowledge about cultural diversity by personal experience and through exposure. Diversities complement each other and/ or clash, due to the variety of cultures sharing a classroom.

Learner 10FWA2 said,

“Elke kultuur het ook sy eie tradisies. Dit is belangrik dat elke persoon bewus is van kultuur-verskille. Omdat ons demokraties is en vryheid het, sal ons met ander kulture oor die weg moet kom.” ¹⁷

Learner 11FWA5 agreed with Learner 10FWA2's comment, and added that

[“W]e need to work and live in peace and harmony with other cultures, treating each other with respect.”

Learner 12FWE8 said,

[“D]ue to a lack of knowledge about other cultures, misconceptions / misunderstandings create division.”

Learner 11FXE6 commented on the symbolic use of colour in a practical project in order to represent cultural diversity in South Africa:

“The part where there is only the use of black and white on my drawing, presents the diversity of our country and how different races in the youth of South Africa are joined together through their styles, through music and their aspirations.”

This Learner (11FXE6) continued, saying,

“I also belong to the South African culture, the people who are called the rainbow nation; the people who respect and know people like Nelson Mandela; the people who know about things like ‘Ubuntu’, which means humanity and also know about being a diverse nation.”

5.2.2.5 Global culture

When cultural products are promoted across geographical boundaries, the lifestyles of the people associated with those products are also promoted across cultural boundaries. A global lifestyle and culture, rather than a local culture, starts to emerge.

Learner 10FWE3 said,

¹⁷ Every culture has its own traditions. It is important for everyone to be aware of cultural differences. Because we are democratic and enjoy freedom, we need to live in harmony with other cultures.

“Global culture means ‘one world culture’. People will lose cultural diversity and one culture will be experienced by all. Another meaning could be that everyone participate in more than one culture that is not necessarily their own.”

Learner 12FX6 (2015) said,

“The idea of global culture creates a personal feeling of being selfish of my own unique culture.”

Learner 12FWE8 (2015) reflected on her artwork and commented on the domination of global culture:

“This artwork was made to show how the media hides things from us. The barbed wire over the faces symbolize the ‘chains’ that make us unable to break free from everyday culture.”

(Please refer to ADDENDUM B to view this artwork.)

5.2.2.6 Contemporary (art) culture

Contemporary art mirrors twenty-first-century culture and society, which could be described as globally influenced, culturally diverse, and technologically advanced; thus challenging traditional boundaries and easy definition.

Learner 11FWE8 reflected on contemporary art culture after viewing the work of Faith 47, a contemporary South African street artist, online.

“These days visual art is viewed on a computer screen. People no longer do the effort of going to galleries or museums to view art; they just ‘Google’ it.”

Learner 12FWE8 (2015) said,

“Tattoos are quite popular in contemporary culture. Many young people have tattoos these days. Yet, sometimes things have a darker history than one would expect. In the days of the Nazi regime, Jews were tattooed with a number, forever marking them, reminding them of the horrors in the concentration camps.”

In Project 3 learners were asked whether it is possible to define the Coca-Cola can that had been the object of discussion as an artwork. Learner 12FWE8 answered:

“No, it is a mass produced item with no artistic value. It is used and then thrown away”.

Learner 12FWA5 differed from some learners who considered the possibility in terms of visible art elements and design principles.

“Nee, dis ‘n ontwerp, nie ‘n kunswerk nie.” ¹⁸

Learner 11FWE3 (2015) answered:

“No, although the name Raj gives a sense of identity, it [Coca-Cola] is worldwide known as a cool drink and not as an artwork.”

Learners reflected on the following question: Will it make any difference when the same object (the Coca-Cola can) is elevated and exhibited on a museum plinth? Learner 12FWE8 answered:

“No, it is merely a found object. Nothing was changed about the can, merely the environment.”

Learner 11FWA1 (2015) said,

“Ek sien die voorwerp steeds as ‘n alledaagse Coke-blikkie, maar ek sal dan definitief op ‘n meer kritiese wyse na die kunstige eienskappe kyk.” ¹⁹

Learner 11FWE3 (2015) answered:

“No, museums normally contain things that are unique with a powerful message. Anyone can buy a can of Coke and own it.”

These reflections, and more specific references to the ‘environment’ of an artwork, and ‘powerful message’, led to a group-discussion about the relationship between public art and environment.

Learner 10MWA12 said,

“Kuns is deel van ons geskiedenis; herinneringe van ons verlede. Dis ook ‘n vorm van protes. Kuns is nie net gedefinieer deur standbeelde en skilderye nie, dit [kontemporêre kuns] kan uit enige iets gemaak word. Tegnologie het alles verander. Daar is egter ‘n fyn lyn tussen ‘n paar stukke rommel uit die vullishoop en ‘n blikmannetjie wat uit die rommel gemaak is.” ²⁰

¹⁸ No, it is a design, not an artwork.

¹⁹ I still view the Coca-Cola can as an everyday object, but I will definitely look in a more critical way to identify the artistic features.

²⁰ Art forms part of our history; it is memories from our past. It is also a form of protest. Art is defined not only through statues and paintings, but may also be created from any available contemporary medium. Technology changed everything. There is a fine line between the rubble on a heap and a tin man that was created by re-using the rubble.

Learner 10FWA10 said,

“Kunswerke het meer impak as dit in die publiek vertoon word, as in ‘n museum.”²¹

Learner 10MWE13 said,

“Art doesn’t have to be beautiful. Opinions differ.”

Learner 11FWA1 (2015) elaborated:

“Truth overrides beauty in contemporary artwork. It’s about some deeper meaning. Unfortunately we are in fact influenced by others’ opinions and the norm society sets for us, but truthfully we all should decide by ourselves what is beautiful and what is not.”

5.2.2.7 Discussion: CULTURE

The extensive variety of derived understandings about ‘culture’ that were developed through the projects, demonstrated the deep- rooted influence of culture in the lives of the learners. The sub-themes were: Cultural history and heritage; Culture versus no culture; Slaves of culture; Cultural diversity; Global culture and Contemporary art culture.

Most learners defined ‘cultural history’ as an individual’s past, referring to ancestors, previous generations, traditions and experiences, including issues such as Apartheid as part of South Africa’s history. These understandings suggest that we are born into cultures and not necessarily with a particular culture. Furthermore, participants contended that ‘traditional’ culture responds to new influences, e.g. objects belonging to foreign visitors, emphasising the fact that culture is never static. Therefore culture is something that we learn; it is dynamic and constantly adapts to changing circumstances (Tomaselli 1986; Bhabha 2003). Learners 11FWA4, 11FCA7 and 12MWA9 commented on their experience of insufficient education regarding cultural history, while Learner 10FWA2 stressed the importance of the awareness of cultural difference, and suggested that we as citizens of a democratic country, should learn to respect cultural difference. Bhabha (2003:206) makes a clear distinction between the notions of cultural difference, on which he believes the historical study of critical theory is based, and cultural diversity. Bhabha describes ‘cultural diversity’ as still depending

²¹ Artworks, when exhibited in public, have a stronger impact than in a museum.

on a more binary, 'good/bad', 'right/wrong', 'either/or', and 'this/that' way of understanding culture. The concept of 'cultural difference', according to him, implies a process whereby the concept of culture is freed from such 'finite' and 'specific' restrictions in its definition.

Different cultures and economic systems around the world reflect the impact of structural globalisation (Held *et al.* 1999:70) when becoming interconnected, due to the influence of large multinational companies and of improved communication and transport systems. Modern communication, the boundless World Wide Web and the success of global news networks like CNN have also contributed to cultural globalisation. Culture appears to have become a key issue in our interconnected world which is shared by so many ethnically diverse societies, but is also pervaded by conflicts associated with religion, ethnicity, ethical beliefs, and, essentially, the elements which make up culture. Although no consensus has yet been reached on the effects of globalisation on cultural production, many people (such as learner 12FXE6) believe that a society's exposure to foreign culture may undermine their own cultural identity, including their indigenous knowledge systems. Tomaselli (1986:3) contends that the most changing aspect of merging cultures is not a decline in diversity, but the ways in which people locate themselves in a globalised world. How they do so is still rooted in culture. While both Tomaselli (1986) and Bhabha (2003) claim that 'culture' is subject to change, learner 11FWE5 argued that our identities change over time as we experience more things and our circumstances change, but our 'cultural history' remains the same. Bhabha (2003: 206-209) argues that 'culture' cannot be set in stone, that its meaning and knowledge is dynamic and dependent on individual contexts. This is why the concept of culture is problematic: it cannot be pinned down due to its ever-changing nature. It also problematises the notion of development as development cannot be seen as simply moving from Third- to First-world ways, as it was traditionally understood.

Although some Coloured and White learners reflected on their 'issue' with 'culture' in Project 1, feeling that they do not have a true Coloured or White culture in South Africa (in comparing their apparent 'absence of culture' to the rich cultural heritage and family traditions of the Xhosa learner), they gradually developed clearer understandings of what the term 'culture' encompasses. In Project 2, a clear distinction was made between 'African culture', 'personal culture', 'gamer culture' and even 'skateboarding culture'. In Project 3, some learners expressed strong opinions about their South African cultural heritage that seems to be threatened by current protests, demanding the

removal of historical symbols representing South Africa's pre-democracy history (Beeld, March 30, 2015).

Learners' reflections showed that they have acknowledged the Arts as integral part of their cultural history. Our discussion about contemporary culture (Project 3, p.23) included contemporary art as well as the role of the contemporary artist in society. Contemporary art may be defined as the work of artists who are living in the twenty-first century, including people with whom the learners can personally identify. The fact that contemporary art mirrors contemporary culture (which forms part of the researcher/educator and participants'/learners' world), it provided a rich resource to both the learners and myself through which to consider current themes and re-think existing concepts. These reflections and group discussions enabled learners to understand that contemporary art is part of a cultural dialogue that concerns larger contextual frameworks such as ideas about beauty, personal and cultural identity, family, community, and nationality. Learners' references to art as a form of protest (Learner 10MWA12) and "powerful message" (Learner 11FWE3), recalled the concept that 'power is everywhere'. (Foucault 1980). Foucault addresses the impact of the relation between power and knowledge on society. Learner 11 FWA1 (2015) argued that "[the power of knowledge about] Truth overrides beauty in contemporary artwork". Foucault recognises power as not necessarily being a negative force, but an essential and productive force in society (Gaventa 2003:2).

This discussion engendered further debate among the learners about cultural heritage, which linked to a comment of the former Mexican President, Vicente Fox, who contended that "Monuments and archaeological pieces serve as testimonies of man's greatness and establish a dialogue between civilizations showing the extent to which human beings are linked" (Fox, s. a.: <http://izquotes.com/quote/64795>). Although the Apartheid system does not fit the description as a testimony of man's greatness, the consequences thereof cannot be erased from history by destroying particular Apartheid-era monuments. Learner 11FWE3 (2015) argued that, because of the fact that statues capture a moment in history in the same way that art captures a moment in time, statues and monuments could also be classified as art. Learner 11FWA2 (2015) remarked that the current situation regarding the protest actions against historical statues in South Africa recalls the period between World Wars 1 and 2 when international anti-war movements such as Futurism (1909-1914) and Dada (1915-1923) protested against historical conventions (moral, cultural, religious and political) of a pro-war society, and aimed to destroy all art traditions and historical links. Learner 11FWA1 (2015) questioned the consequences of the removal of statues and symbolic images

representing South Africa's rich history, while learner 11FWE3 (2015) made a strong statement by referring to the lack of both moral values and intelligence of UCT students in distinguishing between right and wrong. This rather sweeping statement could be engendered by a personal feeling that the country's past needs to be preserved. Both learners expressed their concern about the safety of South African citizens, and criticised the acts of violence involving memorials that represent our nation's history on a national level. The issue of crime in South Africa is a complex one. Just as there is no single cause of violence and crime, there is no single solution.

Learners argued that they could gain potentially by having their cultural and historical identities included as part of classroom learning. Cultural identity is important for people's sense of 'self' and how they relate to others. Differences might become easier to understand and information would probably be accepted more easily. This may result in a dual process of making meaning of an experience of globalisation, by learning about other cultures and at the same time reflecting on one's own cultural identity. (Batos, in Delacruz, 2009:261).

The National Curriculum Statement (NCS), (Department of Education, South Africa 2011:8) specifically aims to introduce Grade 10 -12 Visual Arts learners to the diversity of Visual Arts traditions in Southern African and international contexts, and use it as a resource. The Grade 10, 11 and 12 Visual Arts learners at Montagu High represent a culturally diverse group and, furthermore, attend Visual Arts class as a multi-grade group. This specific teaching and learning situation has the potential to provide multiple benefits, as well as potential conflict.

It is clear that culture is not static, but always changing as each generation contributes its experience of the world and discards things that are no longer useful to them. Reflecting on one's own cultural tradition, belief systems and values, and investigating those of other cultures have become a necessary requirement for both educators and learners in our constantly changing world. Therefore, cultural history and heritage, cultural diversity, and global culture should be an integral part of Critical Citizenship Education.

5.2.3 Democracy

Since knowledge is expressed through language, learners' reflections on democracy could help to shape learners' understandings of reality. "Democracy", derived from the Greek expression *demos kratia*, meaning "people power", mostly describes the particular kind of political arrangement of a society. In its basic form, democracy attempts to develop relationships based on mutual respect between a nation and its citizens. Critical Citizenship Education seeks to develop specific knowledge, skills and values in learners that, in effect, may help to develop their identities. The socio-cultural, economic and political conditions of the colonial and apartheid past have shaped citizen identity and nation-building in particular ways. Indigenous knowledge systems of the local people were in the past overruled by colonialists in favour of Western knowledge systems. In order to understand the meaning of the "African Renaissance" (Mbeki, 1998) and the revival of indigenous knowledge systems in South Africa, one first needs to consider the effects of the Dutch and British colonisation that restricted a comprehensive perception of democratic citizenship.

5.2.3.1 The 'born free' generation and the concept of freedom

'Born frees' refer to people born after 1990 – South Africa's first post-apartheid generation.

Learner 11FXE6 remarked,

"Democracy and Freedom started in 1994 and since I was born in 1997, I am 'born-free' because I never got to experience the fact that I never had freedom and rights."

Learner 10 FWE3 said,

"I fit into the 'picture' of democracy because I was born in the 'Born free' generation. I experience the concept of Freedom and Democracy by living and growing up in a place where we are not discriminated against because of our colour."

Learner 11FWE8 said,

"Democracy for me is basically something in which everyone participates. So I am one of the many people necessary for a democracy to succeed."

Learner 10FWA2 noted that freedom may be experienced within a system of authority, represented by the Constitution.

“Jy kan gaan waar jy wil en doen wat jy wil volgens die land se wette”.²²

Learner 11FWA4 mentioned that

“Die hele punt van Vryheid en Demokrasie is om die outokratiese regeer-styl uit te sluit. Demokrasie beteken dat almal in die land ‘n sê het in die besluite wat geneem word. Dit streef na regverdigheid en vrede.”²³

Learner 10FWA1 emphasized the fine balance maintained within democracy between order, boundaries and rules and the danger of having too much freedom.

“Dis ‘n fyn lyn, want te veel vryheid is nadelig. Selfs in demokrasie moet daar perke, orde en reëls wees.”²⁴

5.2.3.2 Individual and equal rights

The South African Constitution stipulates that the Government should protect and promote the equal rights of every individual. Learners reflected on their understandings of their own individual and equal rights.

Learner 10 FWA1 said,

“Ons het tydens hierdie projek demokraties besluite geneem. Ons het dus ons burgerskap uitgeleef,”²⁵ [adding]. “Aangesien ek nie in die apartheids-era gebore is of gelewe het nie en in die demokratiese tyd grootword, het ek nie juis ervarings daarvan nie. My generasie ken niks anders as nou nie. Demokrasie is vir my gelykheid in alle opsigte.”²⁶

²² Freedom: You may go wherever you want to, and do whatever may please you (according to the constitutional laws).

²³ The whole point behind freedom and democracy is to exclude an autocratic style of governing. Democracy means the freedom of voice in the decisions that made in a country. It strives towards justice and freedom.

²⁴ It is a fine line, because too much freedom is detrimental. Even within democracy there should be boundaries, order and rules.

²⁵ During this project (referring to Project 1) we made decisions in a democratic way, thus ‘living’ our citizenship.

²⁶ Due to the fact that I was neither born in, nor lived during the Apartheids era, but grew up in the democratic period, I have not really experienced it. My generation does not know anything but the present. I consider democracy as equal rights in all respects.

Learner 10 FWA2 commented:

“Elke persoon het gelyke regte en geleenthede. Al kan ek nog nie stem vir ons land nie, ervaar ek nog steeds Vryheid en Demokrasie. Ek kan na enige skool, winkel, kerk, ens. gaan. Ek mag ook insette lewer. Ek word ook toegelaat om my eie opinie oor iets te hê.” ²⁷

Learner 11FWA4 said,

“Vryheid en Demokrasie is vir my ‘n goeie ding, want ek voel dat almal individuele besluite moet hê.” ²⁸

Learner 11FCA7 remarked that

“Vryheid en Demokrasie is om te maak, te gaan, te sê wat jy wil. Jy het die reg om te stem vir wat jy wil hê, jy mag vriende wees met wie jy wil en gaan waar jy wil. Demokrasie beteken om te stem vir wat jy wil hê of waaraan jy glo.” ²⁹

Learner 12MW9 emphasised his freedom and right to vote (for the first time).

“Ek is deel van die generasie wat Demokrasie en Vryheid laat voortbestaan. Vir my is dit belangrik om vryheid te kan hê. Demokrasie is jou reg om ‘n stem te hê vir wat jy verkies.” ³⁰

5.2.3.3 Democracy and the role of school and curriculum

Learners reflected on the following question: In which ways can school and curriculum work towards democracy? Their responses are recorded below.

Learner 11FWA4 remarked,

²⁷ Every person has equal rights and opportunities. Although I am still too young to vote, I still experience freedom and democracy. I can go to any school, shop or church. I may give my input. We are allowed to form our own opinions.

²⁸ Freedom and democracy have a good cause, because I feel that everyone should have the right to individual choices. Democracy is applied in my life when I vote for school prefects.

²⁹ Freedom and democracy is to act, to go and to express your own free will. You have the right to vote for what you want, you may be friends with whoever you choose, and you go wherever you want to go. Democracy means to vote for what you want or what you believe in.

³⁰ I am part of the generation which promotes the survival of democracy and freedom. It is important to experience freedom. Democracy is your right to vote according to your choice.

“In vakke soos geskiedenis en kuns waar ons ‘n opvoeding kry oor wat demokrasie is en hoekom dit nodig is en dan ook op die manier hoe die leiers in ons skool verkies word.” ³¹

Learner 11FWA4 continued, saying,

“Demokrasie word byvoorbeeld in my lewe toegepas wanneer ek moet stem vir skool prefekte.” ³²

Learner 11FWA5 commented that,

“Demokrasie word toegepas by skool-opvoeding deur die feit dat ons ‘n vrye keuse tot vakke van Gr 10 af het, of ons skool toe gaan/nie en of ons hardwerkend gaan wees of nie. Jy het vryheid tot jou inset in jou skool loopbaan. Leerders kan meer uitgevra word oor hul uitkyk op ‘n onderwerp sodat hulle hul eie interpretasie kan deel en ‘n standpunt van hulle individualiteit kan maak.” ³³

Learner 11FXE6 answered,

“[the school and curriculum work towards democracy] through letting every student vote for the prefect they want, and if they have a problem at school they could complain about it.”

Learner 11FCA7 commented that,

“Die skool kan meer die kinders in ag neem en die laat stem oor hoe en op watter manier hulle dinge wil leer.” ³⁴

Learners 10FWA2 and 11FWE8 suggested that education should provide more information and research opportunities regarding democracy. Learner 10FWA2 suggested,

“Daar kan vir ons meer vertel word van demokrasie in die kurrikulum. Ons kan ook take kry waar ons prakties ondersoek instel oor demokrasie.” ³⁵

³¹ In subjects like history and art we are educated about the meaning of democracy and why it is necessary; it (democracy) represents the way in which leaders are selected in our school.

³² Democracy is practised in my life when I vote for school prefects.

³³ You have the freedom to decide whether you attend school or not; whether you are going to be working hard or not. You have the freedom to have an input in your schooling. Learners’ opinions could be asked to determine their interpretation of a topic in order to let them make a statement about their individuality. The fact that we have freedom of choice in our school education, regarding the subject choice from grade 10 onwards, shows the application of democracy in our school-education.

³⁴ The school should consider the children (learners) and give them the opportunity to vote about the way they want to learn.

³⁵ We should be informed about democracy in the curriculum. We could receive assignments that require practical research about democracy.

Learner 11FWE8 asserted that

“Education about how to achieve democracy is needed so that students know what part they play in their country’s future.”

Learner 12MWA9 answered,

“Deur almal se opinie te hoor en daarop te reageer. Ek voel meer aandag kan gegee word aan die kinders wat die minste aandag vra en nie as belangrik geag word nie.”³⁶

5.2.3.4 Discussion: DEMOCRACY

Three sub-themes emerged from learners’ reflections on the concept of democracy: The born-free generation and the concept of freedom; Individual and equal rights; and Democracy and the role of school and curriculum.

All the learners who participated in this research were born after 1994, making them part of the ‘born free’ generation who enjoys mostly positive experiences of the concepts of freedom and democracy. Most of the learners responded by acknowledging the fact that they are free to make decisions regarding their subjects and voting for class leaders, prefects, etc., and described their education as democratic. Learners 10FWA2, 11FWA4, 11FWA5, 11FCA7, 12 MWA9 suggested that democracy represents their individual rights and power to make decisions. (The ancient Greek word ‘demokratia’ literally means ‘people power’). Learners 11FWA4, 11FWA5 and 11FXE6 acknowledged that democracy forms part of History and Visual Arts education, and that they practice their democratic rights when making subject choices and when voting for new prefects. Learners 10FWE1, 11FWA5, 11FXE6, 11FC7 and 12MWA9 felt that, although they experience democracy, there are fellow learners who do not, and need special attention to voice their opinions. Educators could devise assignments that encourage learners to express their individual opinions about democracy. Learner 10FWA1 emphasised the fine balance maintained within democracy between order, boundaries and rules, and the danger of having too much freedom. Teenagers need boundaries to help them develop into responsible adults. Parents and educators should guide teenagers how to take responsibility for their behaviour, attitudes and emotions. Learners 10FWA2 and 11FWE8

³⁶ By listening to everybody’s opinion and to act accordingly. I feel that more attention could be given to those children (learners) who are not considered as important, because they ask the least attention.

suggested that education should provide more information and research opportunities regarding democracy. Learners argued that they should be allowed to make decisions concerning projects in collaboration with their teacher and not be left out of the planning of things.

The findings of Project 1, involving the concept of democracy, showed that new skills and understandings were developed. During their “Living Citizenship” group-project (2014), planning their design took the Grade 10-group longer than expected, due to very strong individual opinions which had to be negotiated by the learners in a civilized way through dialogue. Dealing with the issues on a theoretical level and then realising that they actually had to apply the theoretical ideas to their group work process strengthened the learning experience for them. The Grade 11-group, however, enjoyed the freedom of developing their own unique designs for their celebration cups. The only requirement had been that the surface decoration should include images and colour, as well as lettering. Lyons (2010:457) presents another dimension of ‘freedom’. He argues that, “[f]or other students, the responsibility to make sense of what they see can be intellectually liberating.” Intellectual freedom could liberate people from being dependent on decisions by people other than themselves. Instead, they could make their own decisions, shaping their own world.

During Project 3 (2015), while investigating the concepts of identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship in a contemporary art context, learners developed new understandings about democracy, a widely-used term referring to the political agenda, but seldom associated with the art world. The grade 11 learner’s guide (2012:324) mentions the democratic nature of the art world, referring to the unlimited access to information and images by means of the printed media and internet which has caused the art world to become more democratic as the focus moves to art of countries other than Europe or America. As a result, learners discovered that ‘freedom’ refers to more than the state of not being imprisoned, and freedom of speech. In project 3 the learners discovered new ways of thinking about the freedom of artistic expression in the contemporary art world where controversial artists express their political ideas, and even inspire political movements with their images. In this sense, art could teach us about democracy, because artists could be important contributors to activating dialogue in our society. Contrariwise, Martin (in Schmidt Campbell & Martin, 2006:5) argues that, although the unveiling of a sculpture or monument is a public act, there is “no guarantee that art will promote social justice or democracy”. By exhibiting art works in public spaces, artists could invite the public to talk about issues and start thinking about their own responsibilities as citizens.

5.2.4 Equality

In South Africa human rights are protected. This means that nobody should discriminate against anyone else because of aspects like skin colour, age, religion, language or gender. The Constitution of South Africa rules that everyone in SA is free to practice whatever culture they wish and speak any language they choose so long as this does not harm anyone else's freedom to do the same.

5.2.4.1 Educators' responsibility

Learners gave their opinions about 'equality' after reflecting on the following question: What responsibilities do schools and educators have in order to acknowledge the notion of 'equality' in the classroom?

Learner 10FWA1 said,

"Alles moet gebalanseerd wees. Onderwysers is nie veronderstel om hul persoonlike opinies op leerders af te dwing nie." ³⁷

Learner 10FWA2 said,

"Onderwysers en skole speel 'n groot rol. Hulle moet kinders die nodige agtergrond gee sodat hulle die verskillende kulture met respek kan behandel. Hulle moet ook dit baie sensitief behandel, sodat hulle niemand se gevoelens seer maak nie." ³⁸

Learner 10FWE3 commented that,

"The school-education and curriculum can make a contribution to democracy by treating all the students equally and with respect."

³⁷ Everything should be balanced. Educators are not supposed to enforce their personal opinions on the learners

³⁸ Educators and schools have an important role in shaping learners' cultural, social and political understandings. They should provide the necessary background, so that the children [learners] may treat different cultures with respect. They should do it in a sensitive way, without hurting anyone's feelings.

Learner 11FWA4 commented,

“Onderwysers moet leerders help in hierdie proses, maar nie die leerders se keuse beïnvloed nie.”³⁹

Learner 11FXE6 said,

“The teachers’ responsibilities are that they should respect each learner’s background and culture, and not treat them differently because of who they are.”

Learner 11FWE8 remarked,

“Educators should help learners to understand others in order to create an environment of equality in the classroom.”

5.2.4.2 Discussion: EQUALITY

Equality may be described as the state of being equal, especially in social status, rights, or opportunities, and not to be discriminated against. Our aim at Montagu High is to create a safe environment in which the learners can develop their individual academic skills on a competitive base, to explore possible subject combinations, make choices and accept the responsibility for these choices. Learners have the opportunity to take part in various school-based as well as extra-mural activities offered by the school in order to develop leadership skills and social skills on various levels. These skills may potentially enable learners to “build their capacity to become active and effective citizens” (Fisher 2008:195).

All learners emphasised the importance of the responsibilities of the school and educators as shapers of cultural, social and political understandings, as well as the creation of an environment of equality. Learners argued that educators and schools educate the ‘next generation’ and suggested that learners should be taught to accept everyone as equal. Learners 10FWA1 and 11FWA4 noted that educators should provide the necessary information without deliberately trying to influence the learners’ opinions, and may not force learners to accept their personal opinions. To illustrate this, learner 10FWA2 referred to the human rights of English speaking and Muslim learners which have been acknowledged in our school in various situations and contexts. Learner 10FWA2 further

³⁹ Educators should assist learners in this process, but should not influence their decisions.

suggested that educators should be equipped with the necessary background information (knowledge) to be able to guide the learners in the process of shaping their understandings. This comment highlighted the importance of adult education and the effective training of educators. Training and education is necessary to introduce people (including educators and learners) to new ideas and develop alternative ways of thought and perception (Briggs 2005:104).

The new CAPS Curriculum (Department of Education, South Africa 2011.) advocates a firm base in principles like social transformation, active and critical learning, human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice, and the promotion of “knowledge in local contexts, while being sensitive to global imperatives”. An optimistic outlook for the future may be projected by the government, while it may potentially be a marginalising force which separates the learner from his/her history, culture and spirituality. Kempf (cited in Dei & Kempf 2006:130) critically questions teaching resources that are traditionally developed around the government curriculum, and argues that, instead of contributing to the holistic development of the learners, dominant education is a marginalising force which separates the learner from his/her history, culture and spirituality. The ignorance of educators and lack of proper information regarding cultural perspectives and concerns often result in strengthening false or stereotyped teachings. A holistic approach that includes the development of skills such as critical and creative thinking, as well as problem solving, could potentially enable people to make informed decisions, whether to accept and apply, or ignore knowledge alternatives. Addressing the concept of social justice by means of creative challenges and opportunities should be part of classroom activities. This could help learners to develop the capabilities of interacting in a socially responsible and democratic way towards other individuals, their own society and the broader world in which they live. Instead of allowing our past to define us, we should work through the negative aspects and focus on the positive to help and shape us into better citizens that work towards a socially just and more equal society.

Learner 11FWE8 asserted that educators should help learners “to understand others” in order to create an environment of equality. This particular reflection recalled a quote on the cover page of the Conference Proceedings booklet: “There can be no peace without understanding” (International Conference on the Relevance of Critical Citizenship Education in an African Context, 2014). Peace is a priceless quality of the learners’ secure and ‘equal’ learning environment at Montagu High School where they have equivalent opportunities on multi-dimensional levels to thrive without any threat of war or violence. Contrariwise, the inner fear that many of these learners experience is of a deep-

seated nature: the fear of not understanding the learning content and corresponding questions; of not knowing what to answer and the fear of forgetting. Add to this situation the inability to concentrate, to unpack information, to select the correct answer; the difficulty in formulating an idea and writing it down in such a way that the examiner will be able to read it and complete the assessment. In this case, 'cognition', the psychological process by which knowledge and understanding is developed in the mind, may potentially be influenced by a variety of factors and issues. Social life and activities away from their secure school environment in the communities where they live may be a different matter for some learners and may even contain elements of distrust, fear and victimisation. By being critically conscious of learners' living conditions, educators could act knowledgeably. Kincheloe (2005: 6-7) argues that reflection on socio-political inequalities by both educators and learners may provide new understandings of how these disadvantages have shaped their "worldviews, perspectives on education, and self-images". Poverty has a significant impact on learners' school attendance, self-confidence and academic performance. According to Carl Rogers "significant learning is possible only when the individual has self-confidence in his ability to learn and feels that the experience of learning will be personally rewarding and meaningful" (Marton *et al.*, 1997:10).

Dr Judy Willis (2014) commented on similar disadvantages on a global scale that impact learners outside their school environment. These inequities may be the result of not being raised by two functional parents; of growing up with socio-economic adversity; of schools struggling to function without quality educators, teaching material and technology; of learners becoming too old for their grade and having to leave school with no further learning opportunities, as there is no vocational school in the area. Dr Willis (2014) argued that even the harshest disadvantage at any point in a learner's education could be transformed into a hopeful perspective in order to increase a learner's mental capacity. The amelioration of the human condition could potentially lead to improved cognition, social, physical and emotional abilities.

During the last two decades, the transformation process in South Africa, concerning the role of Critical Citizenship Education has been challenged by the colonial legacy which is still deeply embedded in South African society. Research clearly shows that colonialism in the sense of imposition and domination did not end with the return of political sovereignty to colonised people (Dei & Asgharzadeh 2006:56). This is clearly evident in the different ways knowledge is produced and receives validation within schools, thus linking to the notion of the hidden curriculum that

emphasises the norms, values, and beliefs communicated to learners through educational practices and curriculum content (Gude 2000:3). Educators try not to influence learners' decisions in an obvious and deliberate way. Yet, it happens, and that problematises the situation. Critical Citizenship Education that involves social and economic issues also includes cognitive transcendence, especially in a spiritual way; an approach that is often neglected in educational curricula.

5.2.5 Citizenship

5.2.5.1 Participation and belonging

Identifying with and belonging to a community or country forms part of an individual's knowledge of how to relate to the world and fellow citizens.

Learner 10 FWE3 said,

"Citizenship is the character of an individual viewed as a member of a society. Citizenship is when you belong to a specific country that you call 'home' [and also remarked] "Citizenship is when you belong somewhere. It is proof of your homeland. Every country or continent has its own rules, flag and people."

Learner 11FWA5 said,

"Dis 'n persoon se interaksie met sy omgewing. Burgerskap is wanneer iemand hulself deel maak van hul omgewing en hul land." ⁴⁰

Learner 11FXE6 defined citizenship as

"a 'membership'. A devotion to a country where you live."

⁴⁰ A person's interaction with his environment. Citizenship refers to someone, becoming part of their environment and their country.

Learner 11WCA7 said,

“Burgerskap is om deel te wees van ‘n gemeenskap of land, jy beeld jou land uit, bly in jou land en is deel van die eenheid van jou land.” ⁴¹

Learner 11FWE8 defined citizenship as

...“the act of being part of a community and participating in the country’s democracy.”

Learner 10FWA2 said,

“As jy ‘n burger is van ‘n land behoort jy aan die land.” ⁴²

5.2.5.2 Human rights

All human beings are equally entitled to our human rights, which are based on the principle of respect for the individual, without discrimination.

Learner 10FWA2 continued, saying,

“Jy behoort ook regte te geniet. Burgerskap is die reg om byvoorbeeld in S.A. te bly. In S.A. het elke burger stemreg omdat ons ‘n demokratiese land is.” ⁴³

Learner 11FXE6 commented that,

“Citizenship applies to a person that is born in a certain country and has the right to let his/her voice be heard; and has got the right to vote for any political party in the country at a certain age”[and furthermore remarked]“As a citizen of a country you must have the right to vote for any political party in the country without someone looking down at you, or someone who won’t let your voice be heard because you aren’t rich as they are, or you are hardly noticed by anyone.”

⁴¹ Citizenship means to be part of a community or a country; you represent your country, live in your country, and are part of the unity of your country.

⁴² Being a citizen of a country, implies ‘belonging’ to a country.

⁴³ You should also enjoy rights. Citizenship is the right to live in South Africa, for example. Because South Africa is a democratic country, every citizen has the right to vote.

Learner 12MWA9 defined 'citizenship' as,

"Die reg om in die land te wees en om aanvaar te word as individu en burger van 'n gemeenskap." ⁴⁴

5.2.5.3 Loyalty and patriotism

Patriotism is associated with an individual's loyalty and commitment to a country or nation.

Learner 10FWA1 said,

"[Dit] is jou lojale betrokkenheid by jou gemeenskap." ⁴⁵

Learner 10FWA2 said,

"Ons het tydens hierdie projek demokraties besluite geneem. Ons het dus ons burgerskap uitgeleef." ⁴⁶

Learner 11FWA4 said,

"Om in 'n land te leef as patriot en ambassadeur vir daardie land te wees en liefde vir die land uit te beeld; om lief te wees vir die mense wat daarin woon." ⁴⁷

Referring to the "Living Citizenship" project, learner 11FXE6 said,

"This project certainly made me realize that being a young person in South Africa is actually a very cool thing."

5.2.5.4 Ethics

Ethics are the set of moral principles that guide a person's behaviour. Some learners questioned the ethics that led to the removal of historical statues and symbolic images representing South Africa's cultural heritage, and further questioned the consequences of such a decision.

⁴⁴ The right to be in the country, to be accepted as an individual and a citizen of a community.

⁴⁵ It is your loyal participation in your community.

⁴⁶ During this project (referring to Project 1) we made decisions in a democratic way, thus 'living' our citizenship.

⁴⁷ To live in a country as patriot while acting as ambassador and expressing love for the country; to love the inhabitants of that country.

Learner 12FWA4 (2015) said,

["M]orele waardes is elke persoon se eie idees en ideologieë oor korrekte optrede en wat 'reg' is. Etiek fokus op wat reg en verkeerd is ten opsigte van die 'groter prentjie'." ⁴⁸

Learner 12FWA5 (2015) said,

["M]orele waardes gaan oor of dit vir jou persoonlik reg is. Etiek is die waardes wat in ondernemings nagevolg moet word." ⁴⁹

Learner 12FXE6 (2015) described moral values as

..."something that you stand for / believe in."

Learner 12FCA7 (2015) said,

"Morele waardes is hoe 'n persoon dinge doen en van kleins af geleer is." ⁵⁰

Learner 11FWA1 (2015) remarked:

"Dis moreel verkeerd op soveel vlakke om die verlede te wil vernietig. As ons gedenktekens nie veilig is in ons land nie, is ons mense ook nie; dis nie net die beelde wat herinneringe is nie." ⁵¹

Learner 11FWE3 (2015) said,

"Even though I think that vandalism is wrong, there is another side of the story. What are the people really trying to say by destroying the memorials? If you lived in a world where you had a house, food and security, then you would probably not have the need to destroy our history. It could be a cry for help. They could be saying that they want to feel safe in their country, that they want a place where they can live and not be hungry."

⁴⁸ Moral values are people's own ideas and ideologies about how to act correctly and what is 'right'. Ethics focus on what is right and wrong according to the 'bigger picture'.

⁴⁹ Moral values determine whether something is right (or wrong) in a personal sense. Ethics are the values that companies have to follow.

⁵⁰ Moral values are described as the way a person acts, and how a person is brought up.

⁵¹ Wanting to destroy the past is morally incorrect on so many levels. If our memorials are not safe in our country anymore, nor will our people be; it is not only the statues that remind us of the past.

5.2.5.5 Global citizenship

The following understandings were created during a group-discussion about global citizenship. Our discussion was guided by a semi-structured questionnaire.

Learner 10FWA1 referred to an object that had been used as part of an installation art work:

“Vir my is wêreld-burgerskap om êrens te bly, en hierdie tas [met verskeie reis-etikette] simboliseer om enige plek in die wêreld te bly.”⁵²

Learner 10FWE3 said,

“Global citizenship belongs to a person who has citizenship in more than one country.”

Learners reflected on the opportunities created by globalisation and the benefits of global citizenship: Learner 10FWA1 said,

“Rekenaars is die toppunt van globalisering vir my.”⁵³

Learner 10FWA2 said,

“Mense regoor die wêreld kan met mekaar kommunikeer deur byvoorbeeld ‘facebook’, ‘skype’, ‘whats app’, ensovoorts. Almal is aan mekaar verbind. Besighede en ander maatskappye het ook baie te doen met globalisering en word daagliks omver gegooi en moet aan kreatiewe maniere dink om kliënte te behou.”⁵⁴

Learner 10FWE3 said,

“It is when businesses start to operate in numerous countries in the world. They become influential in countries other than their country of origin.” “Globalisation is the stepping stone to the future. It is what connects us to others. It provides masses of information at our fingertips. There would be no future development without globalization.”

⁵² I understand ‘global citizenship’ as ‘living somewhere’, and this suitcase (referring to a suitcase with travel labels, representing global travel) symbolizes the concept of (global) ‘living’.

⁵³ I consider computers to be the acme of globalization.

⁵⁴ People all over the world can communicate with each other by means of ‘facebook’, ‘Skype’, ‘Whats App’, etc. Everybody is interconnected. Businesses and other companies, heavily involved in globalization, are disrupted on a daily basis and have to innovate creative ways to retain customers.

Learner 11FWA5 said,

”’n Wêreld-burger is iemand wat sy identiteit met ’n globale gemeenskap plaas, eerder as om sy identiteit as burger by ’n spesifieke nasie of plek te plaas.”⁵⁵

Learner 11FXE6 referred to:

“‘digital citizenship’ as either being a consumer or producer of internet facilities or computerized equipment.”

Learner 11FWE8 commented,

“I think world boundaries certainly did move but only for certain people. Things such as Skype and online gaming removed those boundaries completely. With modern technology I can speak to my sister who lives in America. But for those who do not possess that luxury they [world boundaries] stayed the same.”

Learner 12FC7 (2015) said,

“Globalisasie skep baie meer geleenthede vir ons as jong volwassenes en dit maak dit baie makliker om nuwe dinge te leer, en om goeie geleenthede aan te gryp.”⁵⁶

5.2.5.6 Art and citizenship

Dewey (1958) highlights the critical and social function of art and argues that the process of art or creativity is found in all human actions. Human creativity is formed mostly in the subconscious.

Learner 11FWA1 (2015) said,

“It is important to have knowledge of your heritage. Historical events and happenings can determine the nature of the art being made, and as time passes those events and happenings could mean something else; so could the work of art. The role of the artist changes and evolves as the human race does and as society’s needs and purposes for artists change.”

⁵⁵ ‘Global citizen’ refers to someone defining his identity within a global society, rather than accepting citizenship of a specific country or place.

⁵⁶ Globalization provides more opportunities for us as young citizens which makes it easier to learn new things, and to make use of our opportunities.

Learner 11FWA2 (2015) said:

“Artists and art that make statements politically, socially and religiously have great value nowadays ...”
“The only boundaries art would be defined by, are those set by society. Artists who want to make an impression usually say what everyone wants to hear, through their art of course. Then you get artists that overstep those boundaries set by society to say what everyone else is afraid to say. I think boundaries change as our modern world changes and as people evolve.”

Learner 11FWE3 (2015) said:

“In many respects art is capturing a moment in time. All artworks have a date to them. A date that classifies them to a specific era or art movement. Art is the creative expression of that moment or time. Therefore statues and monuments can also be classified as art. Statues capture a date in time that played a big role in history. Therefore the meaning [of statues and monuments] may change through the passage of time.” This viewpoint may be applied to historical sculptures whose meanings also might have changed over the years.

5.2.5.7 Citizenship Education

Learners reflected on the following question: What responsibilities do schools and educators have as shapers of cultural, social and political understandings?

Learner 10FWA2 remarked,

“Skole dra ‘n groot verantwoordelikheid. Onderwysers moet ‘n wye agtergrond van al die aspekte hê om te kan praat. Al is ons ‘n Afrikaans-medium skool, kry kinders wat Engelssprekend is soms aantekeninge in Engels. As ons godsdienst hou kan die Moslems die klas verlaat of as ons CSV het.”⁵⁷

Learner 10FWE3 said,

“Teachers have the responsibility to teach the students of social, cultural and political aspects so that they can shape our understanding of cultural, social and political conception.”

⁵⁷ Schools have an important responsibility in shaping learners’ cultural, social and political understandings. Educators should have extensive background knowledge about all the aspects in order to explain them. Although we are an Afrikaans-medium school, English-speaking pupils often receive notes in English. When we read from the bible or attend assembly, the Muslim learners may leave the class. (They attend another class where they are allowed to read.)

Learner 11FWA1 said,

“Onderwysers het die plig om vir leerders objektief te leer oor die verskillende aspekte sodat leerders die kans het om persoonlike opinies te vorm.” ⁵⁸

Learner 11FWA2 suggested,

“Hulle moet seker maak dat al die nuttige inligting van die aspekte aan leerders verduidelik word. Skole moet kinders blootstel aan al die kulturele, sosiale en politieke opsies wat daar vir hulle is, sodat leerders nie onwys in die lewe ingaan nie.” ⁵⁹

Learner 11FWA4 remarked,

“Kulturele geskiedenis is die geskiedenis van jou wese. Almal se kulturele geskiedenis verskil en dus is die invloede op elke mens anders. Ek glo daar moet in die klaskamers aan elke kulturele groep se geskiedenis aandag gegee word, sodat ons respek vir mekaar kan hê.” ⁶⁰

Learner 12MWA1 answered,

“Deur kinders aan te moedig om te leer by mekaar en mekaar te aanvaar as ‘n individu.” ⁶¹

5.2.5.8 Discussion: CITIZENSHIP

The notion of citizenship is usually not seen as a typical conversation topic among high school learners, at least not in the Visual Arts class. Yet, learners’ reflections on citizenship in a teaching and learning environment created the following sub-themes: Participation and belonging; Human rights; Loyalty and patriotism; Ethics; Global citizenship; Art and Citizenship; and Citizenship education. Participants had to apply the newly constructed understandings they gained during this research to inform their opinions as young citizens in a developing country. I structured the findings regarding the learners’ reflections on ‘Citizenship’ according to the three practical projects.

⁵⁸ Educators have the duty to teach learners an objective approach towards the different aspects to provide learners with an opportunity to form personal opinions.

⁵⁹ They [the educators] have to ensure that all the useful information about these aspects will be explained to the learners. Schools have to expose learners to all the available cultural, social and political options, in order not to enter life unwisely.

⁶⁰ Cultural history is the history of a person’s being. Everybody’s cultural history differs, thus causing varying influences on different people. I believe, to promote mutual respect in the classroom, every cultural group’s history should receive attention.

⁶¹ By encouraging children to learn from each other and to accept one another as individuals.

Project 1 (p.21) required that the learners reflect on the notion of citizenship in their immediate school environment and in their communities. By asking the learners to define 'citizenship', I hoped to create awareness that citizenship is a 'living' reality in their everyday lives as high school learners. In general, learners explained citizenship as the act of being 'part of' and 'being involved'; interacting with their environment and belonging to a society or a specific country which they may call 'home'. Learners 10FWA2, 11FXE6, 11FE8 and 12MA9 noted that citizenship implies human rights, e.g. the right to vote and to participate in the country's democracy; and to be accepted as an individual and a citizen of a community. Learners 11FWA4, 11FWA5 and 11FXE6 acknowledged that democracy forms part of history and art education; that they practice their democratic rights when making subject choices and voting for new prefects. Learner 10FWA2 and 10FWE3 emphasised the importance of being recognised as individual identities in their school environment, and suggested that educators could make a contribution towards democracy (human rights) by learning the students' names and addressing them as 'individuals'. In their description of 'citizenship', learners 10FWA2 and 11FWA4 included words such as loyalty, patriot, love for the country and its peoples, and ambassador. Learner 10FWA2 acknowledged the fact that their group has made decisions during Project 1 according to democratic principles, thus "living" their citizenship. The learners emphasised the importance of a healthy lifestyle in order to develop to lead a productive life as responsible citizens. The kind of self-reflection required to complete this initial conceptualising phase of the first practical project helped participants to come to an awareness of the ways their individual identities are constructed through their interaction within the overlapping and intersecting communities to which they belong.

Project 2 (p.22) aimed to create greater awareness about the interconnectedness of social and global changes, while at the same time attempting to uncover different ways of understanding change and cultural specificity. During Project 2, a class discussion on citizenship in a global context resulted in the following question on which the learners reflected: The idea of global citizenship is emerging as a new approach to understand the way in which people might relate to each other in a post-national era. Has the world really moved beyond national boundaries, or has it moved for some and not others? Learners seemed to overlook the part of the question referring to 'post-national era', pertaining to a mindset in which a nation's identity is no longer important. Instead, the learners placed an extremely high priority on the availability of information through rapid developing communication systems and technology. Learners 10FWA1, 10FWA2, 10FWE3, 11FWE8 and 12FCA7 emphasised new opportunities by means of globalisation. The learners argued that artists who exhibit in places outside their home town, city or country automatically become global citizens

through their art. They actually witnessed a situation like this when the artwork of three former Montagu High School learners received international recognition.

Project 3 (p.23) aimed to uncover the learners' opinions about contemporary art and citizenship, with special reference to the role of art in their communities, and the role of art in a broader social context. Learners' reflections showed their personal opinions about the current situation in South Africa regarding their responsibility as Visual Arts learners and young citizens of South Africa, to take a stance towards the deliberate destruction of public art in the form of statues and memorials. Learner 11FWE3 (2015) further questioned the power of a small group of South African citizens who, apparently have no moral values or "the intelligence to distinguish between right and wrong." Learner 11FWA1 (2015) agreed and added that the safety of the country's citizens may be in question if the safety of national memorials cannot be guaranteed.

At a recent press conference on 13 April 2015, the African National Congress secretary general Gwede Mantashe asserted that attempts to destroy the country's history, would polarise society. Mantashe continued by saying that the situation is complicated by people's changing opinions, and that "Every important historical figure will at some point be judged by the standards of the present". Mezirow (1991:5) describes a process of perspective transformation that is based on an individual's cognitive reflection on his or her own fundamental understandings formed by previous experiences. By critically reflecting on what and how we do things in order to make meaning of our situation within a community or multiple communities, we should attempt to free ourselves from our historical conditioning and imagine a better future (Bhabha 1994:1).

McDougall (2005:3) defines global citizenship "as a moral disposition which guides individuals' understanding of themselves as members of communities – both on local and global levels – and their responsibility to these communities." Wang (2007:83) argues that globalisation as an overwhelming world trend is not simply homogenisation. Contrariwise it enhances cultural identity, due to the fact that people are not passively accepting the influences of globalisation, but exercise their subjectivity to decide whether to reject or accept and integrate a foreign culture. Creative people may contribute to the change and development of a culture. Worldwide communication networks as result of scientific and technological developments allow people to become closer than ever before. Multi-national corporations have made the world one global market. In a negative sense, globalisation may lead to hegemonic control (Wang 2007:85), but since people construct their

identities through their cultures, they will defend them. People's constant search for their cultural roots and an increased awareness of their unique cultural and social identity clearly prove Wang's point that the sense of 'togetherness' associated with globalisation, is not in any way in conflict with diversity. Only when we understand concepts such as 'globalisation' and 'culture', may we realise the impact of globalisation on cultures. This may enhance our understanding of how we should deal with the dynamics of globalisation in changing economic and socio-political circumstances, where cultural behaviour seems to be dependent on man's capacity for learning and transferring knowledge to succeeding generations. Understanding the diversity of peoples may lead to respect and tolerance, both vital aspects in a new global society where cultures may no longer be 'local' in the traditional sense, but different and marked by unity in pluralism (Wang 2007:86).

In the context of global citizenship-education, the ability to think and act as global citizens is imperative and may be highly beneficial in the process of cultivating modern democratic thought. Contemporary debates about the curriculum recall the ideas of Socrates and Seneca (Nussbaum 2002:290) when comparing the concept of "free-born" to the perception that education can only be 'liberal' when it 'liberates' the student's mind. It aims to encourage independent thinking and promotes equal education opportunities for students, irrespective of their social class, gender or ethnic origin, to become reflective and responsible critical citizens.

5.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The presentation and discussion of data aimed to reflect the learners' personal understandings, which were used by me as the researcher to make statements about the issues which have been researched. The three practical projects which formed the basis of this research tried to uncover which new understandings the participants (learners) could create about the notion of critical citizenship and its associated meanings in a teaching and learning environment, instead of passively receiving all the information. The creation of new understandings does not necessarily lead to immediate changes of perceptions (Mezirow 1991:5) and attitudes, especially not in such a short period of time. My role as educator was to create an awareness of more than one perspective which will allow learners to form their own informed opinions, because they will be the decision-making inhabitants of our future world.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I firstly discuss the factual and secondly the conceptual conclusions and implications of this research. I describe the contribution of my research to the Visual Arts subject field in a broader context of Critical Citizenship Education. Thirdly, I reflect on the critique concerning the research and discuss possibilities for further research.

With this research I sought to encourage the creation of new understandings, as well as the reflection of learners' perceptions of and attitudes towards the concept of Critical Citizenship Education in a teaching and learning environment at Montagu High School, Western Cape. The undertaking envisioned that these newly constructed understandings, as well as the justified perceptions of and attitudes towards the concept of critical citizenship would enable learners to identify and challenge issues that could act as potential barriers to personal development and social transformation. This form of transformation also includes cognitive transcendence (Tolle 2005; Greene 1995), especially in a spiritual way; an approach that often receives limited attention in educational curricula. "Spiritual" in this sense refers to the essence of human nature; the awareness of our presence in this world and the different ways we interact with other human beings in a real-life world as part of our journey towards the actualisation of our potential.

The qualitative research design was chosen to provide a more detailed description of the research topic. A case study was implemented as research methodology to obtain an in-depth investigation into the development of the particular topic, as well as the related contextual environment over a period of approximately six months. Working with the school, class and curriculum in which I was already involved, learners' personal understandings about concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship were unpacked. The 20 Years of Freedom and Democracy celebrations in South Africa in 2014 created an ideal opportunity for reflection, and helped the learners to see relevance in content they naturally may not find interesting. The aim of this research was to analyse the understandings, opinions and attitudes of the Grades 10, 11 and 12 Visual Arts-learners in their particular teaching and learning environment through the qualitative nature of the undertaking. In the context-specific environment of the Visual Arts class, three practical projects

were devised for the purpose of this research. Various strategies, such as semi-structured questionnaires, group discussions and individual conversations, were employed to gather data in the form of words, images and artworks.

This research occurred in the specific context of a particular public High School during 2014 and 2015. The situated teaching and learning environment was the Visual Arts classroom, as well as the communities of the participants which provided valuable sources of primary learning experiences and ongoing learning opportunities. The participants in this research were a group of twelve Visual Arts learners, representing Grades 10, 11 and 12. Although the learners attend Visual Arts classes after school hours, our approach is still curriculum-based and requires a “particular type of pedagogical space.” (Smith & Doyle 2002).

The decision to ask the Visual Arts learners to voluntarily participate in this research had been obvious: the respondents had an interest in the subject of the research and were therefore motivated to complete the questionnaire. The grouping of learners, determined by other extra-mural activities in the same time slot, actually worked out well to the benefit of all three grade groups. During 2015 there were three Visual Arts contact-sessions of two hours each in a school week. On the first day, Grades 10 and 11 shared a class; on the second day, Grades 11 and 12 shared contact-time and on the third day, Grades 10 and 12 worked together. This combination meant that individual learners had the opportunity to share their knowledge with, and to learn from, other learners belonging to grade groups different from their own. The fact that learners brought their own ‘knowledge’ to class provided them with a sense of ‘power’ and ‘ownership’ of their individually-constructed knowledge. The meaning of which “may also depend on the situation and on shared social conventions” (Entwistle 1997:10). For practical reasons during 2014 and occasionally in 2015, all three grade groups shared contact-time and work-space as a multi-grade group.

Semi-structured questionnaires required from the learners to formulate their own honest answers, allowing new ideas to be brought forward while answering the questions, and during the discussions afterwards. Free-spoken answers could reveal much about learners’ perceptions and behaviour. In this research, the use of semi-structured questionnaires meant that the researcher worked from a list of topics that needed to be covered with each respondent, but the order of the questions (scheduling) and exact wording of questions (standardising) differed to some extent, as each grade-

group's curriculum-content which underpinned some of the questions, varied. Asking each grade-group to complete their questionnaires in the Visual Arts class had its advantages. If any learner was uncertain about the meaning of a question, he or she could ask for assistance from the researcher, meaning that the quality of the data was improved. Although interviews are more flexible than questionnaires, a critique on interviews is that they are more time consuming for the researcher (Babbie 2010:18; Seale 2012:182). Furthermore, researcher bias could be avoided to a certain extent by self-completion of questionnaires, which has the advantage of being more suited to this type of research employing only a few questions that are relatively clear and simple in their meaning.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

The following sections firstly present the factual and secondly the conceptual conclusions and implications drawn from the findings of my research. Thirdly, the critique concerning the research, as well as possibilities for further research are discussed.

6.2.1 Factual and interpretive conclusions and implications

My main research question was formulated as how do the participants (Visual Art learners of Montagu High School) perceive concepts such as identity, cultural history, democracy, equality and citizenship? The sub questions were: a) What do their reactions to the concepts say about their knowledge and experience of Critical Citizenship Education? b) What do their reactions to the concepts reveal about their immediate and broader context?

Factual conclusions reflect the learners' understandings, interpretations and opinions of concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship. The first stage of their reflections was presented through answering particular questions in the questionnaire. Secondly, they applied their newly constructed knowledge to practical projects. Words as well as visual images explained their understandings of the concepts in their visual diaries during the conceptualising phase of their practical projects. Further interpretations of and personal opinions about the concepts became clear in the actual making phase of artworks. Learners' artworks in different stages of completion became

part of their teaching and learning environment, representing the learning process which, since the beginning of this research, had been reconstructed on a daily basis by learners' actions.

The concept of identity engendered the following sub-themes: Personal identity, Social identity, Cultural identity, and The past and identity. Although many different perceptions about various aspects of their identities were given, it is clear that learners' self-image, world-views and perspectives are shaped by the context of their social-political environment, including their learning and teaching environment at school. Attending a small school with a learner population of approximately 500, learners should have the benefit of being acknowledged as individuals. Yet, this is not always the case. Learners 10FWA and 10FWE3 suggested that teachers could make a contribution towards democracy (human rights) by learning the students' names and addressing them as 'individuals'. Learners valued the opportunity to express their feelings, thoughts and ideas in the Visual Arts class. It formed an integral part of their democratic rights concerning their personal development. Learner 11FWE8 considered the making of artworks a process of self-expression, which enhanced personal understandings. Learner 11FWE8 further claimed that our identities are subjected to change over time as we encounter more things and our situations change. I have experienced exactly this during the past two years when our predominantly Afrikaans-speaking Visual Arts group was joined by English-speaking learners. Although Montagu High is an Afrikaans medium school, the dual medium aspect engendered an exciting development in the Visual Arts class through dealing with language diversity. Afrikaans-speaking learners spontaneously changed over to English, when speaking to their (English-speaking) friends. Hearing the curriculum content in two different languages made it easier to explain and understand difficult art terminology. At this stage, Visual Arts is the only school subject where both Afrikaans and English textbooks are used in class. English and Xhosa-speaking learners are allowed to answer question papers in English when writing Visual Arts tests and examinations.

Initially, learners problematised the concept of culture when White and Coloured learners argued that they do not possess a distinctive culture like that of the Xhosa or Zulu with specific customs and traditions. Gradually, during the discussions, it became clear that there was more to 'culture' than names carrying symbolic meanings, traditional objects, ceremonies and rituals. The following sub-themes developed as a result of group discussions: Cultural history and heritage, Cultural diversity, and Global culture. Cultural history and heritage became an important topic for discussion when protest action of the University of Cape Town student-group was highlighted in the media. Most of the Visual Arts learners criticised acts of violence against historical statues and symbolic images that represent their cultural heritage in South Africa. After reading local newspaper reports about more

acts of vandalism against statues countrywide, strong opinions were expressed about vandalism; especially by learners who grew up in the secure environment of a farming community. These reactions could have indicated feelings of uncertainty about their future and safety in this country. Contrariwise, some learners questioned the motive behind these protest actions and suggested that it could be a cry for help. Statues and memorials carry symbolic meaning for a particular group of people who benefitted during the Colonial period and Apartheid-era. For others without food, a proper home and secure living conditions, these statues have no cultural value. Some learners acknowledged the fact that they learn about South African cultural history in class, but they would like to learn more. I agree that learners should learn more but also understand these concepts in greater depth.

In a culturally diverse context, learners often regard aspects such as different cultural values, language, race or skin colour as the main cause for experiencing a feeling of awkwardness. In this research, the Xhosa-speaking learner reflected that it had been her artistic personality which distinguished her from her 'uncreative' social group. She claims that "the youth of South Africa are joined together through their styles, music and aspirations".

Global culture was no new concept for these learners who were very much aware of the opportunities globalisation could offer. The interconnectedness of nations worldwide, driven by political, economic and technological changes, has always been an integral part of their cultural development. Since both their daily lives and world views will be affected by the increasing transformation of societies and world order, it is critically important for these young people to understand the reality of globalisation (Held *et al.* 1999; Delacruz 2009:88). Learner 12FWE8 remarked that we are slaves to a culture we have created, while at the same time we have the ability to become masters of our own destiny. My comment was: Yes, this is the purpose of Critical Citizenship Education, to develop our abilities to think in a critical, but also in a creative way.

The concepts of freedom and democracy engendered mostly positive reflections from the learners in the research group who were all born after 1994, making them part of the 'born free' generation. Learners acknowledged that they practice their democratic rights when making subject choices and voting for new prefects. They placed a high priority on being recognised as individual identities in their school environment and as citizens in their communities. The Grade 10-group made decisions according to democratic principles in the planning stage of their group-project, thus "living" their

citizenship. Opportunities and human rights, similar to those which form part of the learners' daily lives in school, might not be part of their circumstances at home and in their communities. As educator, I needed to imagine myself in the position of those learners; especially in the context of an increasingly "systemized world" (Greene 1988:12) which requires learner performance on competitive levels. I believe that learners should be encouraged to envision their own preferred futures as well as "the kind of social order that might make such futures possible" (Reardon 1994:39), and to take responsibility for their decisions and actions (Andreotti 2006:48). Learners' reflections showed clearly that they expect the school and educators to take responsibility for encouraging reflection on their cultural, social and political understandings, as well as the creation of an environment of equality. The fact that culture is never static, emphasises the need for effective development programmes to equip educators with the necessary information to introduce learners to alternative ways of thinking and perception. Educators should be aware of the growing demands and challenges of their careers, and personally develop the desire to improve their skills and well-being. An educator's positive approach could have positive results in developing enthusiastic learners.

6.2.2 Conceptual conclusions and implications

Transforming education for the knowledge age has been widely debated by theorists who identified schools and educators, particularly, as key agents of social change (Weldon 2010), while also realising that the transformation of educator identities has seldom been taken into account. Education and the curriculum have an important role to play in realising the aims of our Constitution (Act 108 of 1996). In this sense, I see myself as a key agent. My Master's studies encouraged me to re-evaluate my existing teaching strategies and to develop new perspectives which enabled me to accommodate the changes introduced by a newly-structured curriculum and rapid-changing technologies. This research gave new meaning and purpose to my life as a Visual Arts educator, and brought new understandings about concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship in a teaching and learning environment. Initially, it seemed that I was not supposed, given my position in the institution, to be involved with political or social issues, but, in reality, it is very difficult to not be. It is clear that the contemporary educator has a challenging role in a modern, pluralistic society where multiple worldviews and prominent cultural traditions influence learners' perceptions about their sense of identity and their role as citizens with human rights and moral responsibilities in a complex world. As educators, we need to realise that our teaching and learning

environment exists beyond school boundaries, and encourage learners to make connections between learning experiences in school and communities (Allsup 2003:165; Walder 2007:194; Osler & Starkey 2001:252).

Globally, education systems are undergoing change in replacing the basic transmission of knowledge to more learner-centered teaching approaches with an emphasis on critical thinking and dialogue. Challenged by the size and diversity of their populations, as well as the rapid growth of their economies, the governments of the BRICS countries have announced their decision in 2014 to improve their education systems. In a collaborative effort, governments aim to develop both hard and soft human skills, which reflect outcomes of critical citizenship education.

For South Africa, the most recent country to join the BRICS list of countries in 2010 probably one of the most challenging of these changes has been addressing the shortcomings of educational transformation. The continuing effects of the Apartheid era, as well as gaps in terms of dialogue between government and citizens, might be possible causes that slowed down the transformation process and problematised Critical Citizenship education (Oloyede 2009:246). Transformation has no value if it is not inspired by the belief that the past of all peoples is meaningful.

The significance of dialogue in the process of re-thinking education is emphasized by Santos (2000:358). Engaging in dialogue usually has the aim of reaching an amicable agreement. In this research, learners exchanged their ideas on and perceptions of the issue of Critical Citizenship Education by means of reflection, group discussion, individual conversation and visual communication through their artworks. Misconceptions and differences in learner opinions were negotiated in a civilized way by means of dialogue. In a technologically advancing world where people are becoming more closely interconnected, values such as respect for diversity, tolerance and inter-cultural dialogue are essential to promote a culture of mutual respect.

For all South African people, this process of transformation entails a regaining of their cultural and societal values in order to experience themselves as human beings with dignity. The value of post-colonial theory and criticism lies in its focus on forms of cultural representation in a way that it is alive to the demands of contemporary history and politics. Walder (2007:195) argues that such an approach could enable us to relate our own analyses of aesthetic practices to our 'being-in-the-

world' or 'presencing', both as citizens and educators. In a multi-cultural context such as South Africa there often is tension between preserving cultural identities of different groups (whether they are based on religion, race or language) and promoting national unity. One possible way to address this issue may be to encourage tolerance and dialogue by allowing ample space for differences to be negotiated creatively in educational contexts. Both Freire and Greene insist that the transformation process requires "an engagement with and an objective distance from our culture" (Allsup 2003:158). This statement seems to contradict itself if one defines "engagement" as 'involvement' and "distance" as 'detach from'. In this research "objective" refers to an open-minded, unbiased and non-discriminatory approach. The learners and I aimed to overcome stereotypes which could be a barrier to cultural understanding by avoiding unfair distinctions between diverse cultures. Taking an objective stance may help us to acquire a better understanding of our own cultural values. At the end of the day it is all about people: people from different backgrounds with different perspectives and expertise, forming partnerships to learn from each other and solve complex problems (Nyerere 2006:18).

This research was initiated in 2014, the same year that South Africa celebrated twenty years of freedom and democracy. Even after twenty years, social development still reflects the principles of globalisation, defined as a 're-colonizing force' (Abdi 2006:14) for the latter half of the 20th century. The colonial legacy is so deeply embedded in the South African society that it is still clearly evident in the different ways knowledge is produced and receives validation within schools, as well as how some learners or class, cultural, or racial groups receive recognition and response from school authorities while others do not. The purpose of education, whether it be formal or informal, is to transmit the acquired wisdom and knowledge of society from one generation to the next, and to prepare the youth for future citizenship and active participation in maintaining and developing society (Nyerere 1968:268). The ultimate goal of human development should, first, be to understand that it is an ongoing learning process which enlarges people's choices; and second, the capability of people learning that they can act, and that their actions may make a difference (Bhattacharyya 2004:12; Fenwick 2001: 41). Essential aspects of human development that have emerged from learners' reflections were the opportunity to be productive (to create art that is personally meaningful); to develop self-respect; empowerment through knowledge construction; and a sense of belonging to a community.

This case study provided special opportunities for the learners to reflect on Critical Citizenship Education, which encompasses a wide range of concepts. Changes associated with globalisation (whether economic, social or cultural) have conditioned the context in which educators and learners operate, placing the emphasis on intellectual development. Therefore, instead of being the main source of information, educators should rather teach learners how to deal with these resources, e.g. how to validate, synthesize and communicate information.

6.3 Further research

For further research, it might be useful to examine more closely the link between culture and learning in the South African context. Similar research could be realised in the wider Langeberg Region (of which Montagu forms part), including towns such as Ashton, Robertson, McGregor and Bonnievale. In the absence of Visual Arts as a school subject, other subjects in the field of Social Sciences, such as History or Life-Sciences could be used as context. In my opinion it is vital that further research also employs small groups of learner-participants, and implement and investigate similar concepts in the field of Critical Citizenship Education. A second option might be to research the phenomenon of multi-grade classes in the FET phase of education, as most research done so far was focused on multi-grade teaching and learning in Foundation and Intermediate Phases.

6.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The investigations for this research aimed to explore learners' perceptions about the notion of citizenship through teaching and learning in the FET phase. Learners reflected on concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship – integral factors in education in general, but more particularly in relation to Critical Citizenship Education. Personal perceptions of learners were influenced in various ways by media-reports in local newspapers and on social media, by the curriculum content, as well as through practical projects. Reactions related to Critical Citizenship Education were identified in the research. These perceptions and emotional reactions revealed various aspects of the learner-participants' immediate teaching and learning context, but also of the broader context in which they find themselves. This study therefore contributed to the research field of Critical Citizenship Education in Visual Arts and Visual Culture Studies in a multi-cultural Afrikaans High School in a South African context.

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ADDENDUM A

The following information presents an example of learners' workbook pages for Project 1 (p.21). Visual Culture Study content and related research questions have been included.

Grade 10 Visual Culture Studies
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These references serve as background for practical assignments.

- ❖ South Africa celebrates 20 Years of Freedom.
[Online]. Available: <http://www.gov.za/issues/20years/index.html> [2014, April 9].
- ❖ Grade 10 Learner's Guide (Louw, Beukes & Van Wyk 2011: 193-194). Allegorical Artworks.
- ❖ P. 130 "People developed a sense of identity ..."
- ❖ P. 135 Mosaic (term)
- ❖ P. 136 Glossary
- ❖ P. 137 "The scenes that are portrayed ... are records ..."
- ❖ Pp. 140, 141 Narratives
- ❖ P. 142 "... the art of telling stories was achieved through pictures before it was written down"
- ❖ P. 143 Refer to cultural, religious and political issues
- ❖ Pp.152, 153 Egyptian art
- ❖ P. 164 Greek art: the role of the individual was seen as important
- ❖ Pp. 203-205 Glossary: "Tesserae"; Examples of mosaic.
- ❖ *Art for Children*. 2010. Pretoria: Lapa Publishers. Pp.22 - 23 [Online]. Available: <http://www.lapa.co.za> [2014, September 4].

Grade 11 Visual Culture Studies
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These references serve as background for practical assignments.

- ❖ South Africa celebrates 20 Years of Freedom.

[Online]. Available: <http://www.gov.za/issues/20years/index.html> [9 April 2014].

- ❖ Gr.11 Learner's Guide (Louw, Beukes & Van Wyk 2012: 41). Chapter 1: *With reference to South African Art*.
- ❖ Pp. 41, 42: Durant Sihlali
- ❖ P. 42: Dumile Feni
- ❖ P. 44: Paul Emsley
- ❖ P. 85: George Pemba
- ❖ Pp. 45, 46: "Scars in society".
- ❖ Pp. 140-143. Grade 10 Learner's Guide: "Narrative and commemorative features."
- ❖ P. 311: The role of the artist in society.
- ❖ Practical assignment: Option 1 – "My world through a view finder"
- ❖ Refer to the Video, *Powers of Ten* (1977) by Charles en Ray Eames. [Online]. Available: <http://eamesoffice.com/film/> [2014, June 4].
- ❖ Video: Mary Sibande
- ❖ Video: Hasan en Husain Essop
- ❖ Chapter 3, pp. 90, 91. Art in a changing society
- ❖ Practical assignment: Option 2 – "Portrait". Refer to pp. 128 – 130.
- ❖ P. 298: Identity – definition

Grade 12 Visual Culture Studies

These references serve as background for practical assignments.

- ❖ South Africa celebrates 20 Years of Freedom.
[Online]. Available: <http://www.gov.za/issues/20years/index.html> [2014, September 4].
- ❖ Grade 12 Learner's Guide (Louw, Beukes & Van Wyk 2013: 100 -101). Chapter 3: *Art and Politics*.
- ❖ Chapter 5: Multi-media – alternative, contemporary and popular art forms in South Africa.
p.188

❖ Chapter 6: Post-1994 Democratic Identity in South Africa

P. 246: What is identity?

P. 247: Identity and international art

P. 255: Identity in post-1994 South African art

P. 286: Shirin Neshat – VCS 6.4.

❖ Chapter 7: Mary Sibande (1982). Pp. 318, 319.

❖ P. 376: Installation-art, multi-media and photography.

❖ South Africa celebrates 20 Years of Freedom

[Online]. Available: <http://www.gov.za/issues/20years/index.html> [2014, April 9].

PROJECT 1: “Living Citizenship” (2014)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do you experience the concept of ‘Freedom and Democracy’?
2. In which ways can school and curriculum work towards democracy?
3. How are our individual identities constructed? Write about the various aspects of your identity and explain how they help to make you the person that you are.
4. Explain your understanding of the concept ‘culture’. How does this conjoin with learning in the classroom?
5. What responsibilities do schools and educators have as shapers of cultural, social and political understandings?
6. The theme of Project 1 is “Living Citizenship”. How would you define ‘citizenship’ to explain your personal understanding of the term?

These questions, referring to the concepts of identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship, included Visual Culture Study questions suggesting further reading in the Learner Guides (text books).

ADDENDUM B: Artwork



Project 1: “Living Citizenship” was exhibited at Montagu Library in August 2014.



“Our Land: bringing Human and Land together”. (2014). Acrylic paint on board. Negative areas were cut away prior to the painting phase of the art work.

An extract from a learner’s visual diary explained the symbolism in “Our Land: bringing Human and Land together”. (2014)

“The cross: religious beliefs”

“The arch: as an archetypal symbol it is fundamentally masculine, symbolising strength and support. In mythology arches and doorways are understood as thresholds in time and space of a physical world through which one passes to enter another kind of time and space of a spiritual world.”

“The South African Flag appearing on the back of the sitting figure recalls images of black women carrying their children in an abba karos as they go about their daily activities. This custom, associated with words like ‘care’, ‘nurture’ and ‘safekeeping’, urges South African citizens to take care of their land, to nurture their heritage and keep their communities safe in order to maintain sustainable living standards.”

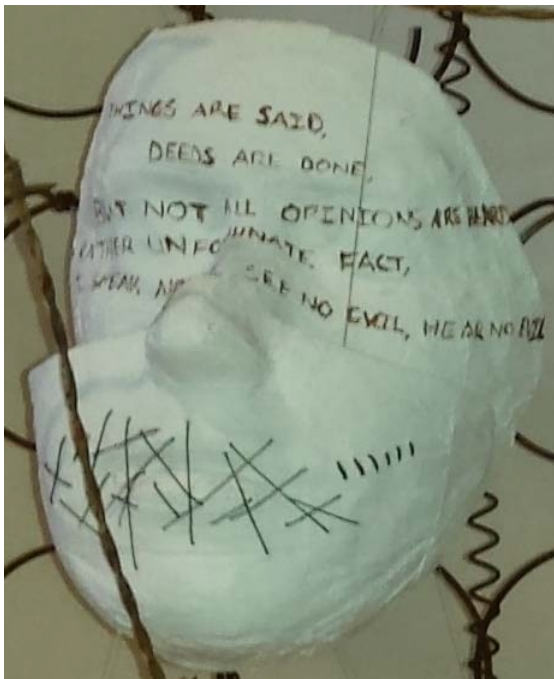
“The unknown identity of the person, sitting under the arch, adds to the universal relevance of the art work; as does the cut-out areas, which provide an opportunity to view the art work in different contexts. With every change in background view, the artwork may engender a different message and meaning.”

PROJECT 2: “Life – a changing journey” (2014)

This project investigated the impact of globalisation on the culture of the participants, in order to create greater awareness of the interconnectedness of social and global changes. It also attempted to uncover different ways of understanding change and cultural specificity (p.22).



“Monkey see no evil” by learner 12 FWE8 commented on the domination of global culture.



Detail: “Speak no evil”



Detail: “See no evil”

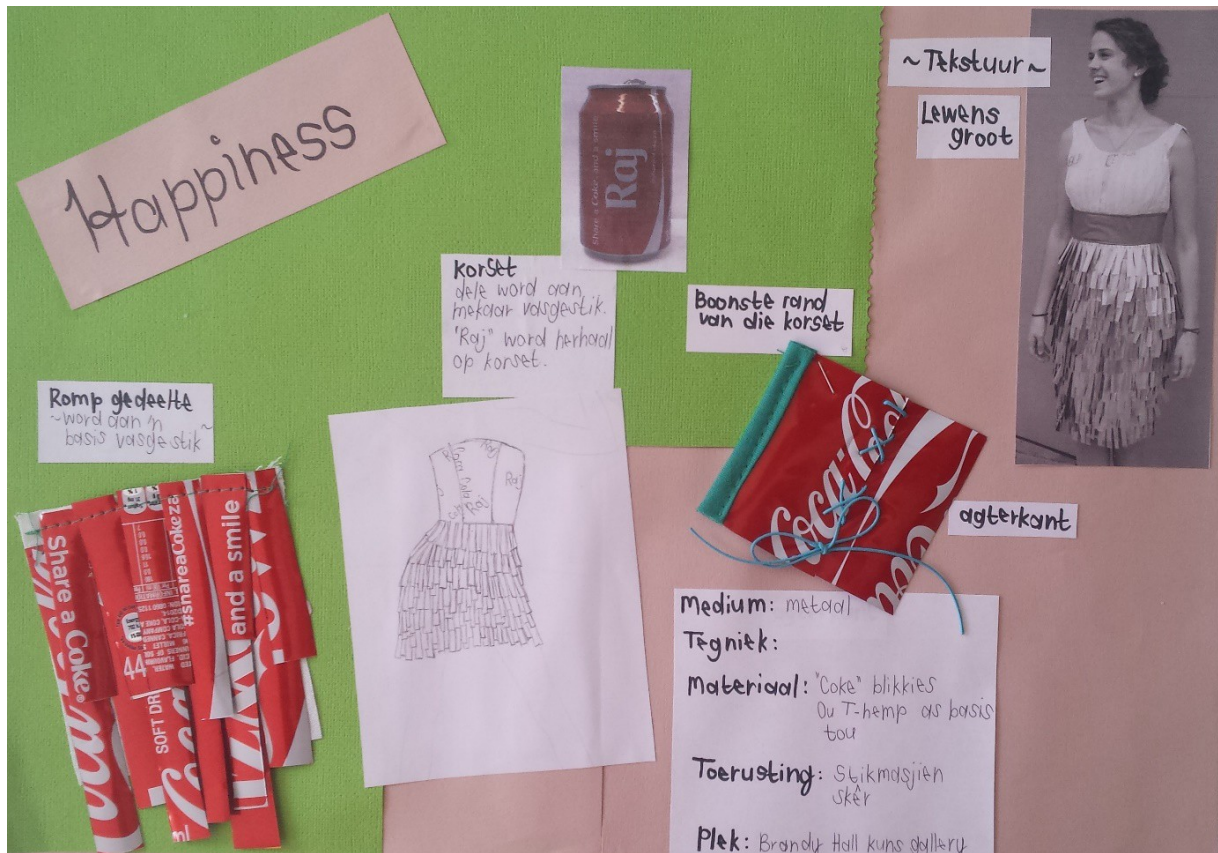
PROJECT 3: “Popular culture and contemporary art” (2015)

This project, which involved three stages, aimed to help learners think critically about their lives, communities, ideas, emotions and values. These included learners’ reflections on the meanings of terms such as community, popular culture, and contemporary art.



Project 3: A learner’s reflection on popular culture and a dream of a skate park she envisions for her community. The mixed media drawing in pencil and charcoal was done on a size A1 paper.

Project 3 (Continued):



Project 3: A conceptualising exercise showing design ideas for a potential wearable artwork with the title, "Happiness" (2015)

- This assignment entailed that the Visual Arts learners imagine themselves in the position of an artist who received a commission to design an artwork for a specific space in their communities. Their inspiration had been the Coca-Cola can which formed part of a group-discussion during the second stage of Project 3 (p.24).
- The purpose of this conceptual exercise was to add new meaning to an everyday, mass-produced object that would normally not be considered as a form of art.
- In this exercise the artist's identity was known; an aspect that would be unspecified and of no importance in the case of the mass-produced object.
- Learners were encouraged to provide a suitable title for their proposed artworks.

ADDENDUM C



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Consent form for Grades 10, 11 and 12 Montagu High School learners.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Wendy Smidt, for a Master's degree in Visual Arts Education at the Visual Arts Department at Stellenbosch University.

Title of study: Critical Citizenship Education: Investigating new understandings in a teaching and learning environment at Montagu High School, Western Cape.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To investigate new understandings of the concept of Critical Citizenship Education in a teaching and learning environment

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

- Share your own personal understandings about concepts such as identity, culture, democracy, equality and citizenship in your community.
- Participate in group discussions regarding Visual Culture Study topics as prescribed by the Curriculum. The current Visual Culture Study topics suggested by the CAPS Curriculum serve as a background and have been integrated with this project to add meaning and significance.
- Focal group discussions will take place during Visual Arts Classes at the Montagu High School.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

I do not foresee any concrete risks to participants.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Participants will not benefit from participation.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Participants will not receive payment for participating.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that could be identified with you as participant will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of keeping all written notes safe in a locked drawer in the Visual Art Class. I shall be the only person who has access to the keys for the drawer.

To protect the identities of participants, I shall not reveal any names. The information provided by learners will be kept confidential.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You may choose whether to participate in this study or not. If you volunteer to be a part of this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain part of the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher, Wendy Smidt, at 0827396141 or the supervisor, Dr Elmarie Costandius, at 0825109790 or at work 021 8083053, Visual Arts Department office 2023, Victoria Street, Stellenbosch.

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact MS Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to me by Wendy Smidt in Afrikaans / English. I am in command of this language / it was satisfactorily described to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this form.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study.

Name of Participant

Name of Parent

Signature of Participant / Parent

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____

[name of the participant]. [He/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in Afrikaans / English and no translator was used.

Signature of Investigator

Date

ADDENDUM D

HESTER HONEY

LANGUAGE PRACTITIONER
91 BRANDWACHT STREET, STELLENBOSCH 7600
TELEPHONE / FAX 021 886 4541
E-mail: hestermh@netactive.co.za

I hereby declare that I have edited the thesis presented for a Master's degree in
VISUAL ARTS (ART EDUCATION) titled

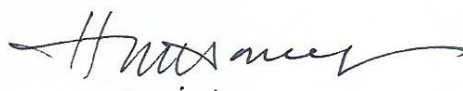
**CRITICAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: INVESTIGATING NEW
UNDERSTANDINGS IN A TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AT
MONTAGU HIGH SCHOOL, WESTERN CAPE**

by

Wendy Smidt

(US 10758194)
Stellenbosch University

and have made suggestions to be implemented by her.



H M Honey

(9/08/2015)